

I can take good constructive criticism. I can understand when someone says we should have taken longer. I can understand that sometimes it is very difficult for a Government of this country to take more time to implement what is needed. In the past we have debated some very serious problems which needed quick solutions that affected farmers or other groups which were in distress. We have had all-Party support for resolutions because everyone recognized the necessity. Surely this is a far cry from what has happened previously. I cannot stand here and continue to condemn the past. If we continue to do that, we will not make good legislators for the future. We must have visions for tomorrow and do the best possible job for the people of Canada.

● (1640)

This is probably the worst activity of the Opposition that we have seen recently. It attempted to use a scare tactic with the native people of the country. Once the opposition Members had made a few statements in the House they ran outside and said that this is a terrible Government. They did that to get as much publicity as they could. I do not feel that they can be proud of that.

In debate in the House today someone said that there is a hidden agenda and a document has been found. They know it is not an official document, but they waved it in front of the microphone in an attempt to look good next week. The time will come when they will see how foolish their activities are. They are not helping anyone.

We have heard speeches about Indian self-government. There are many opinions on what that is. The Government will eventually turn over self-administration without destroying the culture of native groups. I am sure that is the right way to go. However, there is an important factor which we cannot leave out. We must bring them to the table to discuss how we can best help them achieve self-government which will work within the confines of the Government of Canada for the benefit of all Canadians. The consultation process must carry on. It is the job of the Government and of the Opposition to hear those ideas in order to best help the native people and make them proud again, as they once were. We must give them some meaning again, especially in those areas where they have virtually nothing but dollars from the federal Government to keep them going from day to day. The challenge for the Government and the Opposition is to accomplish that rather than to make political waves. Let us look toward tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

While self-government will not automatically ensure economic development, and a stronger economic base will not automatically ensure self-government, I believe that efforts by the Government to foster these interrelated elements will. Such efforts will give communities more scope to make decisions about shifting resources and investment decisions.

The most fundamental part of this is education. Very few of us would have been able to achieve success in our businesses or as parliamentarians without education, a knowledge of the country and of common-sense activities. Education must be

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the thrust of the Government to help those who do not have adequate education. I do not necessarily refer to our type of education with regard to the native people of Canada, but that which is important to them to sustain their growth and culture. That is the important point, Mr. Speaker. As a country we must grow economically sound in order to help those less fortunate than us. We can only do that by putting our economy back together.

An Hon. Member from the Liberal Party indicated that the Department of Indian Affairs has created more problems than it has solved. He made a very valid statement. Through talking to many native leaders I have learned that their bands have lost funding due to improper management by the Department. This is a very sad truth which the Government must address. It is inconceivable that a Department has been allowed to grow so quickly and not be responsible to the people it was assigned to assist. It is a challenge to all Members of Parliament to ensure that money allocated for native development and culture goes to the natives rather than to people in between. To that end I dedicate myself, my Government, and the Opposition.

**Mr. Caldwell:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Hon. Member on his presentation. He gave us all a good insight into the problems faced by our native people. I know he was speaking from the heart. I understand he has several Indian bands in his riding.

Does he think that there has been irreparable damage caused by the leak this week of that document? How long does he think it will take to heal the rift that has developed among the native people?

**Mr. Holtmann:** Mr. Speaker, that will be determined in the weeks and months ahead. I believe that those who are most harshly affected by the poverty levels of native people will fear these accusations the most. Their only resource is monies from the federal Government, whether through welfare or another type of assistance. As you well know, many native people do not have a level of education which allows them to go on to bigger and better jobs, inside or outside their community. If they feel the money that they are receiving will be cut, it will be very damaging to our objectives of helping them find better opportunities.

● (1650)

Yes, I think we have to be sensitive to their needs and not allow this type of unfounded dialogue to be scattered around like paper in a wastebasket. We have to be very careful. We are dealing with people's lives. I for one would not like to see those people, the very needy, who need every source of Government funding to put bread and butter on their table or to be able to buy bedding, the basics while there is no opportunity to get a job, be subjected to further poverty. When there is no opportunity, it would shock them should those minimal funds be cut. That is not the intent of this Government. It never should be. In this country we have economic problems but we do not have to take away what is essential for living, which is