

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question is on motions Nos. 1, 2 and 10. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motions?

Some hon. Members: Yea.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In my opinion, the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to section 11 of Standing Order 45 the recorded division on the proposed motions stands deferred.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Lundrigan)—Fisheries—Initiatives to offset overfishing by foreign druggers—Oceanographic studies; the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. MacInnis)—War Measures Act—Vancouver police refusal of permission to Viet Nam Committee to hold march.

It being five o'clock the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' business as listed on today's Order Paper, namely, Private Bills. As there are no private bills listed on today's Order Paper, the House will now proceed to the order of business Notices of Motions (Papers).

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

INDIAN AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR REPORT BY BERGER, TISDALL, CLARK AND LESLEY LTD.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena) moved:

That on Order of the House do issue for a copy of the report on attitude of Indian people based mainly on a visit to the Six Nations Reserve on July 16, 1969, submitted to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development by Berger, Tisdall, Clark and Lesley Ltd., as referred to at page 6 of the quarterly report on public relations activity, June, July, August, 1969 by the said Berger, Tisdall, Clark and Lesley Ltd.

● (5:00 p.m.)

He said: May I say with respect, Mr. Speaker, that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Buchanan) desires to make a comment first.

Mr. Judd Buchanan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr.

Indian Affairs

Speaker, the department has not felt able to table this report, which should be termed a letter since that is what it is. The reason it has not felt able to do so is that an undertaking has been given to the people who made the comments which have been included in this letter that they would be made on a confidential basis, and that their names would not be divulged. That is the reason the department has felt it was not in a position to table the letter, and therefore the notice of motion for the production of papers has been denied.

However, this morning I had a chat with the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) and explained this to him. He said that so long as we would table the letter he would be quite agreeable to having us substitute, instead of the individual names, the name of an Indian spokesman, and delete the reference to other individuals. Otherwise, the letter is exactly as it came to the department. So, with this understanding we will be happy to table the document as amended and I believe the hon. member will then be prepared to withdraw his notice of motion for the production of papers.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Generally, I am quite agreeable to that. I appreciate the courtesy of the Parliamentary Secretary in calling me earlier today and explaining the situation. I also commend him for doing a fine research job and in convincing the department that it was in error last year when it advised the parliamentary secretary of that day of the circumstances surrounding what is now termed a letter.

I might add that the quarterly report of the company in question, namely, Berger, Tisdall, Clark and Lesley Limited, makes reference to this particular document, which is now called a letter, and in fact it is called a report. My reference to the word "report" was based on the use of that term by the company in question.

I wonder if I could say in passing that I do not think it is material whether I withdraw the motion or whether we assume it is passed. In either case the same effect will be accomplished, namely, the document which the department has refused to make public earlier will now be made public and quite appropriately so. I am agreeable to withdrawing the motion, but this is immaterial except for the fact that if I withdraw the motion I think the Parliamentary Secretary will have to have the consent of the House to table the letter because there will be no order of the House to do so.

All this leads us to conclude that parliamentary secretaries and cabinet ministers all too often in the past—and this proves the point—have been at the mercy of department officials who may want to conceal something which they have no right to do. I would appreciate it very much if the newly appointed parliamentary secretaries, in prosecuting their positions to the full would look more closely at their departments when documents are classified as confidential.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the wish of the House that the document be tabled, subject to the reservations and