

Motions for Papers

of doing things. I do not believe this is possible unless we are able to negotiate on the basis of respect and mutual confidence, as is the case in all other kinds of negotiation.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Would the hon. member mind answering another question before he ends his remarks? It relates to some words I took down; I believe I have them exactly as they were spoken by the hon. member. If he did not use these precise words, he said something very like them. Though he said it kindly, he said I was not acting in the best interests of the Indian people by asking for the notes of the conversations with the provincial governments at this stage of the negotiations, or at this point of time. May I preface my question by saying I spent a fair part of the summer talking with a large number of Indian people in my own constituency and in other areas. I talked to officers of the Nishga tribal council to which the hon. member has referred, and I also spoke to some of the chiefs of the Nass River band which is covered by the Nishga council. It was at the request of a great number of Indian people who wanted to know whether or not they could have this information—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. The hon. member knows he is not entitled to make a second speech; he has to ask a question.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Coincidentally, I was just reaching that stage, Mr. Speaker. I ask the hon. member this question: If the native Indian people who are concerned about these negotiations were themselves to request this information, these notes about the conversations, would he provide them?

Mr. Honey: I made the comment to which the hon. member referred respectfully and kindly; I want to make that clear. We do not agree but I know the hon. member is acting in what he feels to be the best interest of the native people. To answer his question specifically, I could give no such undertaking because I feel that in negotiations of this sort it is important that the discussions be privileged.

Mr. F. J. Bigg (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to say a few words about the treatment of our native people. The white paper purports to look toward a three-party agreement. As far as the hopes of the government for the future are concerned I, like the Indian people, cannot be anything but

happy about the objectives set out in the white paper. However, I am quite sure that what is bothering the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) and a great many of the Indian people is not the objectives of the white paper but the methods by which we hope to achieve them.

The federal government has offered the Indian people full Canadian citizenship and participation. In this context I realize that some of the native people do not think of themselves as Canadian in the sense that we do. The hon. member for Skeena and I are concerned that in our desire to achieve this end we may in fact take steps which will delay the progress we desire to make by approaching the question strictly from the white man's point of view. If we do not enter into negotiations in the spirit of accepting Indians into the Canadian family, or milieu, as complete equals they will be the first to draw the proper conclusions. At the present time they are experiencing a deep feeling of uneasiness; indeed, this feeling has never left them since the white man set foot in this country.

If we take the attitude that this uneasiness arises from the fact that the Indian is a backward man, incapable of accepting our way of life and, therefore, incapable of becoming a fully-fledged Canadian, we shall fail as miserably as we have failed in the past. I am not here to criticize the white paper but to help put a few guidelines along the nebulous path we are treading. I know the Indian people and I have no hesitation in saying that I love them and they love me. The reason is this: from the time of my birth I have never tried to make an Indian into a poor white man. I love and admire the Indian people because they are great individuals on their own ground; they are great citizens in their own right. As displaced persons from Europe, every one of us, we have no right to tell the North American how he must behave in this country unless we can show him something better and finer. So far, our treatment of them has been far from acceptable to these people. No matter how high and mighty we talk, we are not treating them as equals, we never did, and we are not doing so today. Their distrust is, accordingly, well-founded.

We talk about consultation and we talk about co-operation; we talk about meaningful discussion, but this can begin only from one ground—that of mutual trust. I shall not throw any names around but I know certain people in this country adopt the attitude that