

INDIANS TO BE TRAINED TO RUN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS;

This year the federal Government has allotted about \$18.3-million in the Indian Affairs Branch estimates for community development and improvement. It is part of an estimated \$84.6-million set aside under the broad category of community affairs which includes \$42.5-million for welfare; \$17-million for Indian housing and \$5.8-million for Northern housing.

"In the field of community affairs our main theme is to get the Indians to run their own affairs," said Jean Bergevin, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Indian Affairs Branch. "This has nothing to do with the new policy because in the 1967 pavilion at Expo the Indians had big posters all over the place saying: 'Why don't you let us run our own affairs?' This is exactly what we want to do," Mr. Bergevin said.

"So we are going to concentrate a bit on training - not developing the land for them or running their band affairs for them - but to give all our efforts and money to train them to run their own affairs."

OTTAWA SEEKING INDIAN APPROVAL

Ottawa: The federal government is making a new bid for approval by Canada's 230,000 Indians of a drastic reform of its Indian policies and programs.

The federal white paper made public with such fanfare in June of last year is being put quietly and discreetly to one side.

The federal cabinet as a whole, and Indian Affairs Minister Jean Chretien in particular, wants no repetition of the furor that greeted the controversial white paper.

There is now full recognition of the fact that the reforms, already decades overdue, must come from the Indians themselves in large measure to win trust and acceptability.

The task of winning this acceptance will, Mr. Chretien knows, be long, arduous and difficult.

There are 550 Indian bands in Canada and more than 2,000 reserves.

The Indians differ from band to band, individually, provincially and regionally on the essentials they feel should go into a new agreement with the federal government.

No massive and decisive conference is planned at which agreement will be sought.

The federal government feels that it has no choice but to plod its way through small informal talks with band leaders until a basis of agreement is reached.

These exploratory talks will begin this fall.

As far as the Indians are concerned, one point on which there seems to be fairly substantial agreement is that the Indian Act, with all its imperfections, should be left in place until the Indians and the federal government are able to agree on the general outline of the new policy and Indian program.

In all probability, the original white paper will contribute very substantially to whatever formula is agreed on.

There is belated recognition here of the fact that Indian hostility was generated less by the white paper proposals than by the bureaucratic intentions, sinister indeed, which the Indians were sure were underlying them.

After Centuries of exposure to deals with the white man which stripped them of their lands, lives and means of cultural survival, the Canadian Indians were clearly not tempted to trust a set of white paper proposals assembled, with however good intentions, by white men in Ottawa.

A meeting by members of the federal cabinet with Indian representatives in June, when the latter presented a "red paper" to counter Ottawa's white paper, really marked the point of no return as far as the original white paper was concerned.

The one thing that is certain is that the Indians themselves will have a much bigger hand in framing any reforms that may now be agreed on than they had in the writing of the white paper original.

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