

more immediate future.

The keynote of what I have in mind here is to be found in President Eisenhower's broad policy pronouncement of more than two years ago calling for full consultation by the Federal Government with the Indian people. As you probably realize, there have been a great deal of discussions over the past 18 or 20 months about the meaning of this term "consultation" as applied to Indian affairs. Many varying interpretations, some cynical and some rather unrealistic, have been offered up.

In view of this apparent confusion, I would like to present here a somewhat fuller and more precise definition of what the term means to me. And it occurs to me that perhaps the best way to do this is by listing first some of the things that I would definitely NOT include under the heading of full consultation with the Indian people. To me the term does not mean going out to meet the Indians with preconceived plans or cut-and-dried solutions for their problems all wrapped up in advance. It does not mean merely advising the Indians of what we intend to do and then going right ahead with it regardless of any objections they may have or any views they may express. It does not mean being in too much of a hurry to really listen or being too self-righteous to really understand.

In my definition full consultation has several important, and actually essential, characteristics. First, it involves making a sincere and warmly sympathetic effort to learn just what the Indian people have on their minds and in their hearts. Secondly, it means providing them with a complete and unhampered opportunity for an expression of their views. Thirdly, it means giving the fullest possible consideration within the limitations of law and policy, not to every individual Indian's opinion, but to the clear consensus and to those views which are obviously supported by a majority segment of the tribal population. Finally, in those cases where there are good and compelling reasons for not complying with the tribal requests or recommendations, it means explaining carefully and clearly just what those reasons are and why, from the Government standpoint, they seem to be important.

This is the kind of consultation work which I have been emphasizing as strongly as I can to our own Bureau employees, the kind we have been holding at several tribal jurisdictions recently, and the kind we shall be holding increasingly in the months that lie ahead.

Now, just what is the purpose of these consultations and what are we hoping to accomplish? Unfortunately there is no short and simple answer to that question. As all of you probably realize, there are wideranging differences among the 250 or more Indian tribal groups throughout the country in terms of education, living standards, past relationships with the nearby non-Indian population, and many other pertinent factors. Because of this, the consultation process itself will necessarily vary from tribe to tribe not only in subject matter but even in fundamental purpose. There are, for example, some jurisdictions where Indian children have been attending the public schools for at least a generation, where there has been free and frequent intermingling with the surrounding non-Indian population over a period of years, and where the tribal organization has either disappeared or become almost wholly fraternal in character. In such situations, it seems to me we could normally expect that the consultations would be focused primarily on readjustment of the Indian group's relationship with the Federal Government and on turning over to