

lation, because, as I see it, the changes that may evolve under it will be very gradual changes, as gradual in their effect as the act of 1866 has been.

And yet there will be, paradoxically, an immediate benefit if this act is adopted; the immediate benefit of establishing certain moral values, of establishing the moral question of whether we are going to enforce the principles of the act of 1866.

And I think if we can be given the opportunity to ask that question in the House forthrightly as soon as possible, there will be a moral benefit to the country. If the House decides otherwise, other routes can then be pursued. But I think the procedure should be as our distinguished colleague from Indiana has proposed, that we should go ahead and vote this straight up and down at the conclusion of the period for deliberation that you gentlemen will set for us.

The CHAIRMAN. Does that conclude your statement?

Mr. MATHIAS. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Mathias, I will be as brief as you, I hope.

Mr. MATHIAS. The chairman's words, whether they are brief or otherwise, are always very well worth listening to.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, that is a matter of opinion.

Mr. MATHIAS. That is certainly my opinion.

The CHAIRMAN. And I appreciate your opinion.

Mr. MATHIAS. That is my opinion.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Mathias, you just heard the very able and distinguished and highly respected member of this body, the chairman of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. Do you think that his views on the consideration of this provision respecting Indians is entitled to any weight when his committee, which has jurisdiction over this matter, is now engaged in consideration of that rather perplexing question?

Mr. MATHIAS. Well, Mr. Chairman, let me be frank. I have only known the distinguished gentleman from Colorado to be wrong in one case. I have a very important bill for establishing the C. & O. Canal National Historical Park, and he has not yet seen fit to grant me a day's hearing on that bill in the 8 years I have been in Congress.

Now, as I say, that is the only time I have known the distinguished chairman of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee to be wrong. And I would hesitate to say he is wrong in his views on this subject. However, if we stub our toe once, maybe we can do it twice. But let me say that I have gone over the matters that he discussed very carefully with our distinguished colleague, Mr. Reifel, who as I say has a personal and immediate interest, whose experience and background in this matter is so compelling, and I would be inclined to believe that Mr. Reifel's position was the right position here.

And I won't forecast or predict what he will say, because he will say it for himself.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, then, I go to another question, the question of guns, which has been agitated around here for the past several years, which is another provision that was put into this bill by the other body and which has been under consideration in this body for some time.

Do you think that the House should just accept that, because the other body in its wisdom saw fit to tack it on as an appendix to this so-called civil rights bill?