Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I intend to do this, anyway; but I give Your Honour notice of my desire to rewrite the motion in accordance with your prescription and present it again tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: Before the next item of business is called I might add that notice of a proposed motion was received over the signature of the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Peddle). It is my understanding the proposed motion was not submitted for the consideration of the Chair within the time limit prescribed by the rules. I wonder whether tomorrow or on some other occasion the hon. member might not consider the advisability of giving the necessary notice as required by the rule.

Mr. Ambrose Hubert Peddle (Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Would it be in order for me to ask the unanimous consent of the house to hear the motion.

Mr. Speaker: It is always in order—

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

An hon. Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: It is always in order for the hon. member to seek the unanimous consent of the house. However, there is at least one nay coming from the house.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

INDIAN AFFAIRS

ALBERTA—CONSIDERATION OF POLICY PRECEDING FEDERAL ACCESS TO LANDS—GUARANTEE OF HEREDITARY RIGHTS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development what action he proposes to take in light of the decision of the Indian Association of Alberta to instruct the Indian people in that province not to talk to federal officials and if necessary forcibly to exclude federal officials from Indian lands until there is time to consider the new policy statement made by the minister and to consider it in depth.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to take any particular decision, and in that sense, I have already announced that policy. I also stated that I intended to meet with the provincial premiers and the leaders of the various Indian associations, and if they wish to talk with me, I will be glad to oblige. However, if they are not prepared to do so at this time, and that is their privilege, we intend to enter in the next few months into numerous consultations with the Indians, and we do not intend to change that policy of consultation.

[*English*]

Mr. Stanfield: Is the special unit which was created within the department to discuss the minister's statement with the Indian people now in the field and, if so, will the minister recall it or instruct it to take into consideration the view of the Indian people that they need a fair chance to consider the implications of the minister's proposals before an attempt is made to involve them in discussions?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, the body concerned is not yet in operation to meet the various Indian bands in Canada. I think it is very wise, on the part of the Indians, to take a few months to consider that policy and I am sure that after it has been studied for a while, they will see that in the best interest of all Canadians, their own interest included, there is no discriminatory legislation in this country.

[*English*]

Mr. Stanfield: I have one supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. In view of the attempted motion by the hon. member for Skeena under Standing Order 26, perhaps he might be allowed a supplementary question at this point.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): It is very kind of you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the translation system did not clearly reflect what the minister said, but I understood him to say in response to the first question of the Leader of the Opposition that the government had no intention of changing its policy. Would the minister clarify that first?

Mr. Chrétien: I said the government did not intend to change the policy of consulting the Indians.