

## Questions

that the Government could not sit back. It had to respond to what Indian people had been saying.

It was clear to the Government that many Indians were preoccupied by considerations of their treaties and rights. It was equally clear that this is a complex matter that cannot be resolved quickly.

The Government does not believe that the whole matter of the Indian people's wellbeing should be set aside pending resolution of treaty problems and claims. It is the Government's view that the various elements of the problem should be separated. Treaties include land entitlement. This major factor is dealt with as one which must be worked out on a band by band basis over an extended period of time.

The Government recognizes that many Indians want to see some safeguards which will insure that their land is not alienated from Indian occupancy, remains with the band, and cannot be grabbed by land speculators. The Government hopes that an Indian Land Act can be evolved to provide Indian people with both control of their own land and the degree of protection for it which they feel is appropriate. The legislation will have to be flexible so that the degree of control and protection can be worked out and applied band by band.

Indian land will stay Indian land. It will not be up for grabs by speculators. This does not mean that the present federal trusteeship for Indian land—which is both bureaucratic and paternalistic—should remain. This does not mean that the Minister of Indian Affairs has to make every decision about every summer cottage site leased on Indian land.

It does not mean that Indian people should have to turn to Ottawa every time they want to act.

I would like to see a vigorous debate about what is proposed and what is needed, but I am not very enthusiastic about a debate based on badly written headlines and misinterpretations about the proposals. If people have alternative proposals, they should make their views known.

One thing is certain—the time has come for basic and fundamental changes in a system which works against the interests of Indian people. The federal government has made a series of proposals, aimed at creating a non-discriminatory society, for discussion with Indian people, provincial governments, and the Canadian public as a whole.

We have made these proposals in good faith, knowing full well that they would be controversial, but knowing also that if an attempt was not made to break the pattern of discrimination and paternalism of 100 years, that no progress could be made in solving the problems which have plagued Indian people for so long.

At the root of the Indian reaction to the proposals is distrust of government and Canadian society as a whole. This must change. Concerned Canadians should consider this problem, to be certain that each of us is doing his part to open the doors of opportunity and remove the blight of discrimination from this country.

It is Canadian business that has the jobs to offer Indian people. It is Canadian society which must break down the barriers of misunderstanding.

We cannot solve our problems in isolation. Everyone has a part to play.

## EMPLOYMENT OF SARAH ANNE ROBINSON

Question No. 476—**Mr. Howard (Skeena):**

Since January 1, 1966, has Sarah Anne Robinson, Ph.D. been under contract by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for any purpose and, if so (a) what, in detail, was she required to do (b) in what geographic areas was this work conducted (c) what amounts of money was she paid, and (d) does the government consider that it received full value for the money so expended?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Miss Sarah Anne Robinson has never been under contract to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for any purpose, although she has made a study of the leadership of the Nanaimo band with the Band's consent.

## POST OFFICES CLOSED, CARDIGAN RIDING

Question No. 518—**Mr. McQuaid:**

1. How many post offices have been closed in the Constituency of Cardigan since January 1, 1969?
2. How many more are scheduled to be closed within this Constituency?
3. As a result of these closings, how many people have been deprived of employment?
4. What was the total annual compensation being paid to these people who have been deprived of employment by reason of the above closings?