

Motions for Papers

important—requested that it be transferred for debate. I submit that his request is not legitimate because the purpose of the request is not to transfer the motion for debate. There is no intention on the part of the government to debate this motion. I point out that the abuse by the government of this provision in the rules has gone on for some time. The subterfuge of transferring such a motion for debate is simply used for the purpose of preventing any debate.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, not counting the motions transferred for debate today at the request of the government, there are 55 Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers on the Order Paper which have been set down for debate, if and when the opportunity ever arises. If you look at the situation even casually you will find, with 55 Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers standing now on the Order Paper for debate, that it is impossible for the particular motion now before us ever to come up for debate.

I submit that you should rule that the request by the Parliamentary Secretary to the minister to transfer this motion for debate is not a legitimate request but simply a subterfuge for the purpose of refusing to provide the information or even any explanation to the country and particularly to the native Indian people involved in the All-Chiefs Conference to which this motion relates, which was attended by two spies of the government for the purpose of developing some secret document which is to be denied to the native Indian people.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I think I have a question of privilege because the hon. member stated there were two spies there. The two officials of my department who were there were invited by the Indians. It was an open meeting with the press there, and I will not stand for that allegation by the hon. member for Skeena.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Why didn't you tell them to get out?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not think this is a legitimate question of privilege. It is a point of debate between the hon. member

[Mr. Howard (Skeena).]

and the minister and possibly other hon. members. But the point of order raised by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) is of some interest. Of course the Chair has to read the Standing Order as it is, and I cannot read the minds of hon. members or of ministers who ask, pursuant to Standing Order 48, that a motion be transferred for debate. The Standing Order is quite clear:

—if on any such motion a debate be desired by the member proposing it or by a Minister of the Crown, the motion will be transferred by the Clerk to the order of "Notices of Motions (Papers)".

When this motion, as in the case of a few other motions this afternoon, was called, a minister of the Crown asked that it be transferred for debate. The hon. member claims this request is not made for the purpose of having a debate. If, as I said, the hon. member wants the Chair to interpret what is in the minds of those who seek to have these motions transferred for debate, I cannot do that. I can only interpret the Standing Order, which is very clear. I have to rule that the motion has effectively been transferred for debate.

STANBURY-FIELDS REPORT

Motion No. 360—**Mr. Howard (Skeena):**

That an Order of the House do issue for a copy of the Stanbury-Fields report.

He said: I will try again.

Mr. Russell C. Honey (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, this report has been requested on several occasions by hon. members. The minister has stated that the report was prepared on a confidential basis. It remains in that category. In these circumstances I would ask the hon. member to withdraw the motion.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): I cannot possibly agree to that. This is another denial of information to the Indian people. My friend over here who rose on a question of privilege a while ago—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Transfer for debate.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. A minister of the Crown has asked that the motion be transferred.