

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

[Translation]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I have already outlined the government's position regarding treaties signed with Northwest Territories Indians. We are aware of our obligations under such treaties and we would like to fulfil them as soon as possible but it would not be quite fair to compel Indians to accept a settlement sooner than they want it. Nevertheless, we must go on with our projects regarding northern development and I think that most Indians are wishing for as much progress as possible and this as soon as possible in the Northwest Territories.

[English]

**Mr. Stanfield:** I take it the minister is saying there is no connection between the two. With regard to the question of aboriginal rights as distinct from treaty rights, the minister has said that these rights are before the courts. Is it the minister's position that there is no connection between these rights and any application for the building of a pipeline through the north? Is this the position he takes at this stage when these rights have not been determined by the courts?

[Translation]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to add to what I have already said in the House.

[English]

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister, in order to remove any doubts in anybody's mind with regard to this matter, whether it is truly the position of the minister that he is prepared to receive applications for pipelines without any effort on his part to settle any questions with regard to aboriginal rights?

[Translation]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, it is indeed the government's position. We intend to proceed with the development of the North. Should the Supreme Court give a ruling directly with regard to aboriginal rights, the government would take the situation in hand and decide what ought to be done.

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[English]

**YOUTH****POSSIBLE PROVISION OF SPECIAL MANPOWER CENTRES TO PROVIDE COUNSELLING AND OTHER SERVICES**

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration—I am sure for good reason, although he was scheduled to be here—may I direct a question to the acting minister arising out of a special report concerning young people on welfare issued by the Social Development Council. In view of the evidence in the report that the young people are very much discouraged about the services they receive from the Canada manpower centres, is the minister studying the situation for the purpose of establishing special counselling and other services directed to young people through a network of manpower centres for youth?

[Mr. Stanfield.]

**Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I understand that several meetings have been taking place between various departments of the government on questions related to the one asked by the hon. member. I suggest to him that he might wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I will do so with pleasure. The pleasure of addressing a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare is no greater than that of addressing one to the Minister of Labour. May I ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare whether the question of special centres directed to meeting the needs of young people is being discussed by a committee at the present time and being favourably considered?

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Officials of my department met last week with officials of some of the provinces to discuss this general area, and we are giving the matter serious consideration. I would also like to indicate that the officials discussed with the provincial officials the work activity aspects of the Canada Assistance Plan. The hon. member may be aware that we made the criteria more generous in terms of cost-sharing for projects initiated under the work activity provisions of the Canada Assistance Plan in the hope that more projects could be submitted, and these of course would involve youth. It was the subject matter of the study to which the hon. member referred.

**SUGGESTED TRI-LEVEL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE TO DEVELOP POLICIES TO MEET NEEDS**

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** May I ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare another question along the same lines arising out of the allegations or evidence in the report—whichever word one may wish to use—that the overwhelming majority of young people on welfare are in need of work, would rather work than be on welfare, and are finding considerable difficulty and considerable humiliation in obtaining welfare. In view of this fact, are the minister or his officials considering initiating a national conference of all three levels of government to develop policies and a more decent attitude toward the young with a view to meeting their needs?

● (1440)

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the hon. member did point out, because it was not given too much note, that the study declares they do want to work. That bears out our own studies within the department. As to the suggestion of a national conference, Mr. Speaker, we are giving that some study right now, and we may be prepared to talk further about it with the provinces. I might indicate that we have had several discussions with the provinces already on this whole field. I might also indicate that we have set aside a fund to give us a more accurate analysis of exactly those in this country who are on social assistance, and for what reasons. We have set this money aside in order to give us the statistical data to which the study also referred.