

### Oral Questions

has to guarantee compliance with the convention is the funding that he transfers to the provinces.

Now that his government has drastically cut the provincial funding, I ask the Acting Prime Minister to ensure that Canada can meet its commitments to the convention on the rights of the child.

**Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend should know that transfer payments to the provinces with regard to children have not been cut. They have increased by 3.7 per cent, while at the same time the federal government is increasing its programs by 3.4 per cent.

We are doing our share and we should hope that the provinces will do theirs.

\* \* \*

### ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

**Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Justice.

I would like to ask the minister what policy direction the federal government is willing to take to ensure the protection of aboriginal rights as enshrined in the Constitution, in light of the B.C. court decision with respect to the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en case.

**Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague knows, a very lengthy judgment was rendered on Friday in the particular case to which she is referring.

The Department of Justice, as others I am sure, is looking into that particular judgment right now, which obviously is subject to appeal. The appeal delays have not expired yet.

With respect to the question of aboriginal title, that particular decision was with respect to aboriginal title to land. The decision, I am informed, is on that particular subject with respect to a specific area in British Columbia and should not affect aboriginal titles or rights elsewhere in Canada.

**Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic):** Mr. Speaker, the aboriginal people across Canada felt the blow of the

decision of the B.C. Supreme Court regarding their aboriginal title and the questions they have about that.

What specific and immediate steps are being taken by the federal government with regard to policy regarding aboriginal rights? How would they specifically deal with the fall-out of this decision which has deeply impacted the spirit of the aboriginal community in Canada?

**Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, as I said a few minutes ago, that decision is very lengthy. If I am not mistaken it is somewhere around 390 pages. The case took four years. It is a very complicated case. I am sure that all legal experts on both sides of the issue are looking into the decision right now.

With respect to the specific question of aboriginal title to land claims, et cetera, the Government of Canada has a very specific policy on that, in that the Government of Canada is interested in settling land claims at the negotiating table and therefore invites the Gitksan and other Indian groups to come to the negotiating table, which I must say has been done. The Government of Canada again requests the presence of the Government of British Columbia to the same table.

\* \* \*

### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister speaking on behalf of the minister of health.

On Thursday, the Newfoundland Liberal government announced it was closing 360 acute care hospital beds, laying off medical personnel, reducing hours of operation in community health centres, and removing eye testing from medical coverage, as well as freezing the medicare budget at last year's level.

Yet, on Friday, the Minister of State for Finance and Privatization stated that he felt Newfoundland was setting a good example that he hoped other provinces would follow.

Does the minister agree with the minister of state that these cutbacks are the example he wants provinces to follow in medicare? If so, how do such cuts maintain national medicare standards?

**Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned a few minutes ago, our transfer payments to the provinces in the areas