

*Oral Questions*

The other provision in the national parks policy is: "The Government of Canada will own all land and resources within national parks".

Is it not an absurd situation where the boundaries are simply changed a little to allow for mining within a national park? In effect, is this not doing the same thing as the British Columbia Government is doing in Strathcona Park? Is this not entirely contrary to the the spirit of having a national park system? Will he agree to that and act on it?

**Mr. Speaker:** The Right Hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend, the Minister of Fisheries, has responded on behalf of the Government. I have already indicated to my hon. friend that we viewed the South Moresby agreement as a most important one. It is a very significant milestone in the evolution of Canada's policy in this important area.

We gave very serious and costly undertakings to the Government of British Columbia to ensure that this be achieved. We insist upon the integral respect of that agreement. We are unaware of anything at variance with the fundamental provisions of that agreement.

Given the importance of this, I will be happy to look at the question my hon. friend raises, examine it very carefully to ensure that there is nothing inconsistent with government policy, and report back to her and to the House, because this has been a matter of great national interest.

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● (1450)

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

### PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

**Mr. Speaker:** I wish to draw to the Members' attention the presence in the gallery of the Honourable James R. Thompson, Governor of the State of Illinois.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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## INDIAN AFFAIRS

### TUITION AGREEMENT BETWEEN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism and Minister of State for Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

I have in my hand a telegram which I received from Chief Joe Mathias of British Columbia, Vice-Chief, Assembly of First Nations. In the telegram, Chief Mathias states:

On April 20, 1988 the Minister of Indian Affairs signed a 5 year master tuition agreement between the federal Government and the Province of British Columbia. This was done despite the clear and explicit objections of the Indian people in B.C.

I would ask the Minister of State for Indian Affairs to explain to the House, as clearly and precisely as possible, why the Minister of Indian Affairs signed such an agreement, an agreement that is to be in effect for a full five years, contrary to the strongly stated wishes of the Indian people of British Columbia.

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism) and Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member knows that, historically, the federal Government has accepted financial responsibility for Indian students attending off-reserve schools.

The current federal-B.C. agreement on education provides, for the first time, for the development of local level tuition agreements between Indian bands and provincial school districts, something which was not available under the predecessor agreement. The existence of this provision, which itself is an outcome of the consultation that took place with Indian leaders in B.C., supports Indian control of Indian education, and as such is a step in the right direction.

### LOCAL CONTROL OF INDIAN EDUCATION—GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior):** Mr. Speaker, I have to tell the junior Minister that he does not know what he is talking about. If he looks at Sections 6 and 12 of that agreement, he will know that such a locally controlled agreement is only possible where the local trustees agree and where Canada and B.C. agree, and he will also know that they may or may not accept such an agreement.

Mr. Speaker, local Indian control of Indian education has been the policy of the federal Government since 1973. It has now been shattered.

I would ask this Minister to stand in this House and admit, once and for all, that the promises of self-government, a policy which this Government claims to follow, is nothing but a sham and an empty pretence.

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism) and Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)):** Mr. Speaker, given the record of past Liberal Governments when it comes to self-government for the Indian people, certainly when members of the Liberal Party talk about a "sham" they know what they are talking about.

The Hon. Member is talking about Indian students who attend provincial schools, and in that respect there is an