

lished immediately. Its structure and mandate should be determined in consultation with aboriginal people.

The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in his speech this morning made the most astonishing claim about the Canadian justice system. He said that our system of justice was the most fair and honourable system of justice known to mankind. I would like to ask the minister whether he asked Donald Marshall that question.

Has the minister not read the Marshall inquiry report which said that the legal system failed Donald Marshall at every turn? Does the minister not understand that the Canadian justice system of which he boasted this morning condemned a man to 11 years in prison for a crime he did not commit, because he was an Indian? If that is the rule of law the government wants aboriginal people to submit to, then we say: No thanks.

Mrs. Dorothy Dobbie (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, I listened to the hon. member from Nunatsiag with a great deal of interest because we have many times stood in this House and had an opportunity to share some of our mutual concerns about native people across this vast land of ours.

I heard what he said about the Arctic and the land claims there. He asked the question: "Who gave permission for this land to be used?" But I wonder if he could tell us how he feels about the situation we are actually faced with today. In fact, in Canada we do have more than one peoples living in this land, and we do have treaties in many of the areas of the country.

I believe the member was talking about comprehensive claims rather than specific land claims having to do with certain treaties and certain parcels of land. How does he put that together in his own mind? How do we solve these issues that have to do with conflict of opinion over who owns what land when there are treaties involved and when there are people currently occupying these lands.

Perhaps the member could give us the benefit of his very valid advice on this matter.

Mr. Anawak: I am sorry I did not hear the entire question.

Government Orders

One point I would like to make which I mentioned earlier in this presentation, as I think the hon. member mentioned, is that there are no treaties in the eastern Arctic—absolutely none. No land has ever been given by the Inuit to any European or any other group of people other than the Inuit. As far as we are concerned, we live on that land, know the land, and own that land. If the government wants to negotiate with the people about who owns that land, then it should sit down on the basis that at this moment no other body owns that land, rather than saying: "We have one and a half million square miles of land and we would like to give you some."

All I am saying is that the attitude has been that somebody else owns the land and that we should claim back some of it.

In terms of treaty rights and treaties, we must remember that the Europeans came over, I think, starting in 1492. I must also remind the hon. member that while she can record history in Canada by hundreds of years, we can record ours in thousands and tens of thousands of years.

When the Europeans came over they had in mind that this land was to be claimed for the Europeans. The people in North America, who had no concept of privately owning land and who shared the land at all times, were willing to share that land with the people who came over. There was a miscarriage of justice when the European people who were making those treaties were at an advantage. I have heard of treaties being signed with an *x*. Where is the justice if the treaties that were signed by people who did not understand what was in those treaties?

On the other hand, some of those treaties have not been honoured. I think the hon. member would be well advised to talk to the various aboriginal leaders and ask them what can we do to correct the situation? What can we do to correct the injustice that has been done to the aboriginal people?

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Madam Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the member from Nunatsiag. I think it does this place good to listen to somebody speak from a firsthand knowledge of the plight of native Canadians, the original Canadians, the first nations.