

Inquiries of the Ministry

in view of the total failure registered by the present Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

[Later:]

Mr. Lessard (Lake St. John): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Justice in his capacity as leader of the Quebec Liberal members in the house.

Could the federal government's reserve concerning the transfer of jurisdiction over Eskimos from the federal to the provincial authorities be interpreted as a lack of confidence of the present federal government toward another Liberal government, that of Quebec?

Hon. Guy Favreau (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I do not think I have the right to give an answer in the house in the capacity mentioned by the hon. member for Lake St. John. Moreover, I want to point out that the question period having already lasted 35 minutes, I cannot answer this question.

[Later:]

Mr. Caouette: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. First of all, we have not yet spent 35 minutes on questions.

This is my supplementary question. Could the Minister of Justice inform us of the requests submitted by Quebec, to which the Canadian government cannot or does not wish to accede, concerning the transfer of jurisdiction over 2,500 Eskimos of northern Quebec? Could we know the reasons why the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources and the Quebec minister of natural resources cannot come to an agreement?

[Text]

Mr. Martineau: May I ask a supplementary question.

Mr. Speaker: There has to be some semblance of order in this chamber. I had already recognized the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre on two occasions.

[Later:]

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): I have a supplementary question to ask the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources in connection with a statement of Mr. Lévesque as it appears in this morning's issue of the *Gazette*. Mr. Lévesque said that part of the agreement which the minister read into the record—

[Mr. Martineau.]

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the hon. member rephrase his question?

Mr. Nielsen: Well, I had considered raising the matter as a question of privilege and I have to state the question at some length in order to get across to the minister what I am asking.

Mr. Speaker: My objection to the form of the question was that the hon. member was quoting from a statement in a newspaper.

Mr. Nielsen: Very well, Mr. Speaker. As recorded on page 506 of *Hansard* for March 4, the minister made a statement in this house, the first paragraph of which is at direct odds with what Mr. Lévesque is quoted as having said in this morning's *Gazette*. I am asking the minister whether or not the agreement was as he stated on March 4 or whether it was, as Mr. Lévesque says, that the government of Canada was prepared to cede all administrative rights over the Eskimo people to the province of Quebec?

Mr. Laing: Surely, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would not expect me to accept responsibility for the utterances of another person.

Mr. Nielsen: As a supplementary question, I am not at all suggesting that, but what I am suggesting is that the minister owes an explanation to this house as to why it would seem that what he said on March 4 is at direct odds with what Mr. Lévesque has said.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice a few moments ago called your attention to the fact that under the new procedures today was a day when questions were limited to half an hour. Have we not reached that period today?

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order, and in order to clear up any doubt, we interrupted our half hour question period to revert to motions. The minister will recall that we restarted our question period at 3.43, and we should conclude it at 4.02.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, on the point of order raised by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, I would first call your attention to the fact that he was not recognized; and further to this point of order, it involves the use of the question period which has been experimented with in the house under the new rules.