

*Indian Affairs***MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26****INDIAN AFFAIRS****ALLEGED FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT TO
CONSULT NATIVE PEOPLE IN
DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY**

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena) moved the adjournment of the house under Standing Order 26.

Needless to say that if two weeks, three weeks or a month were, in the past, necessary to inform the people about the business of the house, today it is a matter of days and the citizens who want to be well-informed, who want to participate and to give their opinion on what we are doing in the house, can do it far more easily.

Mr. Speaker, participation also means that hon. members can and must be present in their ridings to meet their constituents and to listen to what they have to say about what is going on in the house. However, since the sessions, these last few years, have been very long, even endless, that pleases only those who enjoy dealing with legal and procedural technicalities while preventing citizens and hon. members from participating in the democratic process.

Therefore we must find some means of shortening the sessions so that hon. members may have some time available to visit their ridings and to live with the people they represent. The purpose of this legislation is precisely to speed up the business of the house. There is no question of putting a gag over anyone's mouth but rather to make it possible for hon. members to work in a more orderly fashion.

Mr. Speaker, it has become a matter of mental health to bear with endless and repetitious debates which contribute nothing of any positive nature.

Therefore, it is not surprising that serious-minded members are not always in the house listening to the same rubbish and rehashed nonsense.

I think that it is normal for hon. members to do some work outside this house while still serving the people they represent, and Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being three o'clock I do now interrupt the debate in order that the house may consider a motion by the hon. member for Skeena pursuant to Standing Order 26.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, before the debate commences may I explain to the house and the hon. member in particular that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) is returning from Halifax where he was in consultation with Indian representatives this morning. He will be in the house within the next 20 minutes, I hope, to participate in the debate.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank the government house leader for the information that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) will be here later to participate in this debate. In light of what the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said yesterday about the refusal on the part of the government to change its policy in this regard, the only hope and expectation is that the minister will have a change of heart and will be able to enunciate to the house, and consequently to the Indian people of this country, something really meaningful and worth while in terms of the government's desires as to its relationship with the Indian people.

The views I wish to express at the outset are not exclusively mine. In fact, on all occasions when we have had an opportunity to express ideas about Indian affairs here I have always tried, as have the members of the New Democratic party who have spoken on the subject, to make my speeches reflect the views of the Indian people and, in other words, to assist in making a presentation to parliament on behalf of the native Indian people of this nation.

• (3:00 p.m.)

We never did feel at any time that it devolved upon a member of parliament, and particularly a government official, to substitute his views for those of the people affected. As was expressed earlier, I do not think there is a great deal of disagreement about the general principle of equality before the law, or that there is a desire on the part of people, Indians or otherwise, that government services should not be made available on an equitable basis. We mentioned this principle as well on June 25. Such things, and I only enumerate these as examples, as health, access to hospitals, social welfare programs, roads, electricity and similar services should be made available without discrimination on the basis of race or colour.

Where the disagreement occurs is in respect of the policy statement of the minister, and I submit these involve two items. There