

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Howard (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Prime Minister a question in a supplementary way. Would the right hon. gentleman be prepared to make a statement on behalf of the government indicating that the government is prepared to set out in the constitution those guarantees necessarily related to hereditary and aboriginal rights of the native Indian people, which appear to be a prerequisite to any meaningful consultation?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the statement issued by the minister some weeks ago, I seem to recall, had the approval of all parties in the house. If there were comments they were just to the effect that we had not done quickly enough what for many years hon. members had asked us to do. It is also true to say that the minister had the authority of the government, and on the question of aboriginal rights the government stands by the statement.

FUNDS TO PERMIT STUDIES BY NATIVE  
PEOPLE—MEETING BETWEEN FEDERAL  
AND PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister whether he has reached any decision in respect of making any grants of funds to the appropriate national committee of the Indian peoples to enable it to conduct the studies they consider necessary to determine their position, and to get the necessary professional advice to put them in a position where they can form appropriate opinions about this proposal or others they may suggest as an alternative?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, it was clearly indicated in the Indian policy statement that as soon as the ombudsman is appointed, he will be empowered by the government to provide the committee on Indian rights and treaties with the necessary funds to undertake its own research.

[*English*]

**Mr. Stanfield:** Am I to understand from what the minister has said that he is refusing to make any grants to assist the Indian people in order that they may determine their stance or attitude in respect of their total position vis-à-vis the federal government and the country?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chrétien:** No, Mr. Speaker. I think that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is confusing

the two organizations. I was just speaking about the committee appointed by the Indians themselves in April to study Indian rights and treaties. The funds to be provided to that committee will be granted through the ombudsman who is to be appointed for that purpose.

In regard to the financing of the Indian organizations, provincial as well as national. I hope to be able to announce a decision soon.

**Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a supplementary question.

Is the minister in a position to tell us whether official meetings have been held between officials of his department and those of the provincial governments concerned and, if so, will the report of those official meetings be published or made available in some way or other for the guidance of the members of this house?

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I have undertaken to visit the provinces. During those visits I meet with the premiers and the leaders of Indian associations who wish to see me and I explain to them our policy with regard to Indians. To date, I have visited two provinces, Ontario and Saskatchewan, and tomorrow I will be in Nova Scotia, I hope to be in British Columbia early next week.

**Mr. Fortin:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a further supplementary question.

If I understand the remarks made by the minister, he is now conferring with provincial governments and Indian associations, and making policy statements. Do those policy statements include negotiations with the provincial governments and Indian associations?

**Mr. Chrétien:** No, Mr. Speaker. We have not yet reached the stage of negotiations on matters of policy. This trip is merely for educational purposes. In fact, I answer the questions put by the premiers and their ministers as well as by the Indian chiefs whom I meet.

[*English*]

REQUEST FOR PRIOR SETTLEMENT OF TITLE  
AND TREATY RIGHTS—FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITY  
PENDING POSSIBLE COURT PROCEEDINGS

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary, a related or a new question, whichever you like, for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In view of the fact that the difficulties which have arisen in respect of the statement of June 25 appear to relate to the