

Oral Questions

the essence of their submissions will be to the joint committee, which is made up of members of Parliament both from the government side and the opposition side. The committee's purpose is to consider that very matter and to make recommendations, at which time the House of Commons, and Parliament itself, will consider the report resulting from that committee.

I think it is clear that the Prime Minister would prefer to see that process take place prior to the meeting in question. I would like to reiterate that there is an assurance that he would be prepared to meet with the Indian leadership at some appropriate time.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister has acknowledged that the native people of this country are not like any other group. They preceded the French and the English. They preceded all our ethnic minorities. The Prime Minister said in the House on Friday that he would meet "again at some appropriate time in the coming months". With respect, it is not adequate to meet with them in the coming months. The request of the leaders of our native people has been to have a meeting with the Prime Minister prior to the report coming back from the committee. That is the crucial time, since that is when the crucial decision will be made. Therefore I repeat my question to the minister responsible for Indian affairs: Does he not think it advisable in this constitutional change process that the Prime Minister sit down this week with this group of unique people, as he has described them?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Madam Speaker, I can only repeat what the Prime Minister said here last Friday in answer to questions by a member of the New Democratic Party. The hon. member is fully aware what those questions were. He is fully aware what the answers of the Prime Minister were. The Prime Minister's decision was relayed to the House of Commons last Friday and the Leader of the NDP has had ample opportunity to study those responses.

I reiterate that I think there is some real benefit to be had in terms of the Indian organizations having the right to appear before that committee. I am glad the committee has indicated they are prepared to hear them and listen to their views which will be aired before that particular committee. It might be helpful, not only to the Prime Minister of Canada but to many of us here in this House, to find a position which can be taken by all members of that committee, which include members of the opposition, with respect to some of the concerns expressed by the native people. The committee is the place to hear the positions which will be enunciated. It will be of extreme benefit to many of us to know what course should be taken which would be of benefit to the native people.

Mr. Broadbent: A final supplementary question, Madam Speaker. I am completely at a loss to understand the minister's reply.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: I read with care the Prime Minister's answers given in the House last week. There are literally thousands of the original people of this land here in Ottawa. There are members of the opposition and members on the government side who are saying, "Yes, work through the committee." At some levels and for some groups, that is appropriate. Our native peoples are unique. They feel strongly about this matter. Could the minister explain to the House why it is impossible for the Prime Minister, who can find time to travel abroad—and I do not object to that if it is on business—to find time to sit down this week for an hour to discuss this fundamental question with the original peoples of this land?

• (1430)

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Madam Speaker, it is becoming obvious to me that the Leader of the New Democratic Party seems to be primarily preoccupied with making political hay.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: You guys never do that.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): He is personalizing for political purposes the concerns of the native people and directing antipathy towards the Prime Minister of Canada. I do not think that is a particularly meritorious posture for the Leader of the New Democratic Party, judging by his past history of deep concern for the interests of native people. That is precisely what the hon. member is doing; he is exploiting the situation in order to direct antipathy towards the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister's position was clearly stated last Friday and can be found in *Hansard*. The Prime Minister was present at the last all chiefs' conference in April and he indicated his commitment. He has delegated other ministers to meet with Indian leaders, and they have done so. Also the Prime Minister did not preclude in his answer last Friday the possibility of meeting with the Indian leaders again. At that time he made the reasonable suggestion that the joint committee on the constitution hear out the native peoples, and I understand that it is prepared to do so.

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CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

INCREASE IN MORTGAGE INTEREST RATES

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Madam Speaker, my question arises out of the government's announcement to increase mortgage interest rates on five-year closed mortgages to 15.75 per cent from 15.25 per cent, and it is addressed to the minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. On a \$50,000 loan with an interest rate of 15.75 per cent, the house buyer will pay a total of \$195,117, or \$145,117 in interest during the life of the mortgage. How can the minister justify this increase in light of the fact that at