

Oral Questions

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as has just been pointed out, the effect of the B.C. proposal is that it will dam up actual cost increases for a period of several months but then, under the guidelines, cost increases if justified may be passed on to the customer. In that respect, it seems that the observations of the Minister of Justice, if fairly quoted by the hon. member, are indeed sound.

Mr. Broadbent: To be perfectly clear, Mr. Speaker, is the minister saying that the only increases in price that can be justified in these essential goods and services in the province of British Columbia after January 1 are those related precisely to and not more than the increase in costs? Is that correct?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, that is what the white paper says and what we have been saying for the past two weeks. I again confirm it to the hon. member.

ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM—REQUIREMENT OF PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF PRICE INCREASES BY BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRMS FOLLOWING REMOVAL OF PROVINCIAL FREEZE

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): In view of the special circumstances that apply in British Columbia, and in view of the minister's repeated assurances that prior notification and authorization will be required in the case of some proposed price increases, such as those for automobiles, can the minister assure the House that all B.C. firms in essential services who are affected by the price freeze in that province will be required to give prior notification to the anti-inflation board of any proposed price increases after January 1?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, many of those firms, as I recall, particularly B.C. Hydro and the British Columbia Petroleum Corporation, are under the jurisdiction of the province. If British Columbia chooses to participate in the federal program, then increases there will be affected by the guidelines and judgments of the anti-inflation board. As to any other essential services, I would have to look at the list the hon. member has in mind. In general terms, firms with over 500 employees, and I am specifically thinking of petroleum companies, will be affected by the guidelines.

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[Translation]

OLYMPIC GAMES

SUGGESTED PARTICIPATION OF ALL CANADIANS IN COST

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the right hon. Prime Minister, I wish to put my question to the Acting Prime Minister.

Considering that the Olympic Games will cost roughly \$1 billion and will probably end up with a deficit of several hundred million, could the Acting Prime Minister tell the House whether he intends to take measures so that the deficit incurred for the games will be shared by all Canadians, since all Canada is benefitting from the publicity and international prestige of the games?

[Mr. Broadbent.]

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): There has been no change in the government's policy in this respect. The Prime Minister indicated from the outset that the federal government did not assume any obligation toward these costs. It was prepared to put into effect legislation to help with the financing of the games—and it has done so—but not at the expense of the Canadian taxpayer.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH NORTHERN QUEBEC INNUIT ASSOCIATION—POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR ONE MONTH

Mr. J. R. Holmes (Lambton-Kent): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and is related to the matter I raised earlier in connection with Standing Order 43. Did the minister receive a request to meet with the Northern Quebec Inuit Association yesterday and was such a meeting, in fact, held?

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Such a request was made. I did not meet with them but I did discuss the situation with Charlie Watt, the President of the Northern Quebec Inuit Association at midnight last night. I am happy to report that they had a good day yesterday and indicated they had made substantial progress toward an agreement.

Mr. Holmes: I welcome the minister's comments. Has the hon. gentleman held additional discussions with the other parties involved in the negotiations with a view to extending the time frame for one month. Bearing in mind that the Northern Quebec Inuit Association has indicated that the outstanding issues can be settled within one month, will the minister take immediate action to extend the period of negotiation?

Mr. Buchanan: Basically we are not unsympathetic to the idea of extending the period, but the Grand Council of the Cree is absolutely opposed to any extension and is adamant that we sign the agreement on November 1. I might make an additional point, though. A procedure is being established in the agreement which is being negotiated which will provide for a period of 60 or 90 days during which a referendum would be held among the various communities to determine whether they are in favour of the agreement or against it.

Mr. Arnold Malone (Battle River): Since there has been a marked slow down in the negotiations brought about by the necessity of translating from Cree to Inuit—some of the volumes are about 800 pages in length—would the minister consider granting the Inuit people an extension of 30 days, apart from the Cree? In making this request I would point out that any precedent set here is likely to be followed for generations, and might possibly set a precedent for developments in the Northwest Territories also.