

James Bay area in order that the province can proceed as quickly as possible with the hydro development and create jobs?

• (1500)

Mr. Allan B. Sulatycky (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, the Indians in the James Bay area are negotiating for themselves with the provincial government, and until they request the assistance of the Department of Indian Affairs we will allow them to carry on their own negotiations.

JAMES BAY HYDROELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT—FEDERAL POSITION ON REPRESENTATIONS OF ESKIMOS TO QUEBEC GOVERNMENT

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the parliamentary secretary. Has the government agreed to the request of the Northern Quebec Eskimo Association to assist them to make formal presentations in discussions with the government of Quebec on the James Bay project? If so, has the government discussed this with the Quebec government?

Mr. Allan B. Sulatycky (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, representatives of the Northern Quebec Eskimos met the minister yesterday and he is considering their representations.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

BANGLA DESH—SUGGESTED SENDING OF CANADIAN DOCTORS TO PERFORM ABORTIONS ON RAPED WOMEN—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the urgent call for help from an United States doctor who is performing abortions on Bangla Desh women raped by Pakistani soldiers, and since time is running out for these 20,000 women who are casualties of the war in a very real and grim sense in that they are dishonoured and cannot return home, will the Canadian government make known to the government of Bangla Desh its willingness to send Canadian doctors who offer their services, at least one of whom has already done so?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. lady for her suggestion. Mr. Gérin-Lajoie is either in Dacca today or will be there shortly and I will pass along her suggestion to him.

Mrs. MacInnis: Will the government give consideration to making known to the Canadian Medical Association an offer of financial assistance to doctors willing to give such immediate aid to Bangla Desh.

Mr. Sharp: I will take that suggestion under consideration.

Inquiries of the Ministry

HOUSING

LOW-INCOME UNITS—NEED FOR INCREASED SAFETY AND SANITATION STANDARDS

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. It arises out of a recent tragedy in a low-income housing unit. Will steps be taken by the government to upgrade safety and sanitation standards in low-income housing and will departmental studies on these topics be made available to interested members?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, any houses built with Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation financing or assistance must meet the standards for construction, safety and otherwise set by the corporation. Those are constantly under review with the National Research Council to try to ensure they are as adequate as possible.

REQUEST FOR IMPROVED ACCOMMODATION FOR MÉTIS—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. In view of the very shocking exposé which appeared in the last two issues of the *Globe and Mail* regarding the Métis people in Canada and the shocking conditions in which they live, particularly in respect of housing, is the minister aware of this and can he advise the House of any immediate plan he has in order to alleviate this very intolerable situation?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, a meeting was held with senior officials of the association by my parliamentary secretary some weeks ago at which a very substantial grant was made to a number of Métis groups for the purpose of improving existing housing. A number of grants have been made to assist them in training officers to apply for and promote housing projects among the Métis people. I could go on. It is a matter of very lively concern within Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and within my ministry.

Mr. Alexander: I understand there has been an application for a grant of some \$18 million, if I am not mistaken, for housing. Is this one of the areas in which the minister has given approval and, if not, can we expect immediate approval of this application as requested by the Métis people?

Mr. Basford: I would have to examine the article to which the hon. member refers, which I have not read.

MOBILE HOMES—AVAILABILITY OF FINANCING BY CENTRAL MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton): Mr. Speaker, could the minister inform the House if Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation is considering making financing available to mobile homes?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, they already meet certain lending require-