

whether Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation has agreed to provide up to \$120 million for the construction of housing for athletes and officials of the games as intimated on page 48 of the city of Montreal brief to the International Olympic Association?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, no such agreement has been made. As a matter of fact, there has been no communication, to the best of my knowledge, with me or any of the officials of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation about this proposal.

INDIAN AFFAIRS

NORTHERN QUEBEC—TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION OVER ESKIMOS

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. From time to time he has reported that discussions were going on between the Eskimos of northern Quebec and representatives of the government of Canada, and I think the government of the province of Quebec. Can he now give a report on those discussions, because the Eskimos are greatly aroused and fear being transported to another jurisdiction?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I know that Mr. Neville, representative of the federal government, has come back to Ottawa during the weekend. He is making his report. As soon as I get it I shall be pleased to make comments to the right hon. member for Prince Albert.

[English]

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, in view of the widespread opposition toward this move, which is almost unanimous among the Eskimos in northern Quebec, and the fact that they do not want to be removed in any way, shape or form from the jurisdiction of the federal government, will the minister give consideration to having representations made by way of a submission to the Supreme Court to ascertain whether or not the government of Canada has the power to do what it is endeavouring to do to these Eskimos who are under the jurisdiction of the federal parliament? Will he have a reference made to the Supreme Court of Canada, in order to protect the rights of these people, concerning whether such action is legal?

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, it is a very important question. We are consulting the Eskimos, as I explained it several times. It is important to ensure that the basic rights of Eskimos regarding their language and their religion are protected. I can assure the right hon. gentleman that the aim of the policy followed by the government is to protect these rights. However, it should be recognized that these people are at the same time citizens of Quebec and this province being a part of Canada, they have rights both as Quebec and Canadian citizens.

[English]

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, may I now ask the minister to answer the question. In view of the aroused feeling on the part of these Eskimos, will he be prepared to consider a reference to the Supreme Court of Canada to determine whether or not they can be legally turned over to provincial control, in whole or in part, against their wishes?

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I have already said to the House that we are considering the problem now and that we have sent a team to discuss the matter with the Eskimos. This team has returned during the weekend and will soon present us with a report. We will then tell the House what their findings are.

[English]

BANK OF CANADA

EXTENSION OF SUPPLEMENTARY RETIREMENT BENEFITS TO FORMER EMPLOYEES

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the fact that former employees of the Bank of Canada—and I am referring to ordinary employees, not to former governors—will not have their pensions increased under the Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act, will the minister discuss this matter with the officials of the Bank of Canada in the hope that their employees will be given the same treatment being given public servants generally?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

FINANCE

INVESTIGATION OF OPERATIONS OF THE MINT

Mr. F. J. Bigg (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance.