

GIFTS FOR HER MAJESTY

Two personal gifts from the Government of Canada were presented to Queen Elizabeth after the Prime Minister's luncheon in Ottawa on October 12. One was an ivory chess set made by a Canadian Eskimo and his wife. The pieces are of walrus-tusk, with half the set on soapstone bases. The chess-board is made of sealskin.

The set was carved by Pacome Krooloot. His wife, Elise, cut and sewed the sealskin board with the help of an elderly widow named Marie. The Krooloots spent six months working on the set.

Pacome Krooloot, who is 39 years old, was born in Chesterfield Inlet but now lives in Igloolik, Northwest Territories, where, in addition to being a community leader and president of the local cooperative, he is known as the best hunter and carver in the settlement. The hunting in this area consists of seal, walrus, caribou, muskoxen and white fox.

Igloolik is a long-settled, self-reliant community on the northeast tip of Melville peninsula, 1700 miles northwest of Ottawa. The population consists of 20 Eskimo families, a Catholic mission, personnel of the Hudson's Bay Company, and an administrator of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

AN AMPHIBIOUS PRESENT

The second gift was given to the Royal Family through H.R.H. Prince Philip. It is a highly versatile amphibious four-wheeled vehicle known as "Penguin". It carries two passengers and can travel 40 miles an hour on land and four m.p.h. on water.

The "Penguin" is equipped with a trailer capable of carrying a load of up to 1000 pounds on land and 600 pounds on water. It can climb a 60 percent grade, and performs well in both bush and open country.

This little car-boat has an unsinkable fibreglass body and weighs 320 pounds. It is about six feet long, four feet wide and two and a half feet high. It will run for an hour on a single gallon of fuel.

The "Penguin" recently was awarded a gold medal as an outstanding example of industrial design at the Triennale di Milano in Milan, Italy.

PIONEER DEBTS WRITTEN OFF

Between 1876 and 1925, the Federal Government advanced loans of seed grain, fodder and other relief to needy settlers in Western Canada. Supplementary advances made in the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan between 1919 and 1923 were financed jointly by the federal and provincial governments on a 50-50 basis. The advances (amounting to about \$16 million) were secured by liens registered against the homesteads, pre-emptions and other lands of settlers concerned. The majority of the loans were repaid some time ago, but in areas of recurrent crop failures accounts have fallen off.

The final step in the programme to cancel such debts has now been taken. In answering the fact recently, Resources Minister Laing said: "I am very happy to play a part in this measure. These liens

have stood in the way of clear transferral of title and their cancellation closes a pioneer chapter of how the West was won. This is an important part of Canadian history".

All liens may now be discharged from the titles for land held as security for these advances on application to the district registrars at the land-titles offices throughout Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba.

The new step will delete liens from lands held as collateral for long-term loans. Since 1960, when the programme was begun, debts totalling \$683,301 have been written off by the Federal Government.

PRICE INDEX OF HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

The combined base-weighted price index of highway construction in Canada rose to 83.4 in 1963-64 and was 9.9 per cent higher than the 1962-63 index of 75.9. All three major components of highway construction increased, led by the grading index, which advanced 13.5 per cent, to 80.0 from 70.5. The granular-base course index rose 9.2 per cent, to 83.9 from 76.8, while the surface-courses index increased 2.7 per cent, to 92.4 from 90.0.

Indexes for five of the seven provinces included in the combined index rose, while two decreased. The index for Federal Government highway construction, also included in the combined index, declined.

The highway-construction price indexes measure the percentage change through time in prices paid by provincial and federal governments in contracts awarded for new construction and reconstruction of highways. The price reference base for the index is the fiscal year 1956-57 and the index expresses prices in each fiscal year ending March 31 as a percentage of prices paid in 1956-57.

BRITISH HOME BUILDERS VISIT

A 26-member Home Builders Mission from Britain arrived in Vancouver, British Columbia, on October 15 for a two-week tour of Canada. The Mission, sponsored by the Department of Trade and Commerce, consists of ten directors of British housing-construction firms and representatives of the British Ministry of Public Building and Works, the Royal Institute of British Architects, the National Building Agency, the London County Council, the Timber Trade Federation of the United Kingdom, the British Woodwork Manufacturers Association and British building societies and trade unions. Besides Vancouver, the Mission will visit Calgary (Alberta) and Toronto and Ottawa (Ontario).

One of the chief purposes of the Home Builders Mission is to study Canada's timber-frame construction methods and their application to a wide variety of dwelling designs. Members will see the milling of Canadian surfaced lumber and the manufacture of softwood and hardwood plywoods. The tour is also giving Canadian builders and lumber interests an opportunity to meet the British builders to discuss possible ways of participating in Britain's accelerated housing programme.