

Inquiries of the Ministry

tary of State. In view of the day to day controversy over New Brunswick's decision, and the fact that the New Brunswick legislature is now sitting, will the minister now state the basis for the centennial capital grants to the provinces?

Hon. Maurice Lamontagne (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, the federal government has offered to contribute to a provincial project up to 50 per cent but not more than \$2½ million. Such project should preferably be of a cultural nature and in the provincial capital, but the authority which will select and initiate the project is the provincial government.

Mr. Bell: May I take it from the minister's statement that this grant does not have to be taken up exclusively in the capital city and exclusively for cultural development?

Mr. Lamontagne: No; I said "preferably".

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Royal): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In the minister's statement of January 8, 1964, did he not suggest that New Brunswick might wish to build a cultural centre in Saint John, New Brunswick?

Mr. Lamontagne: It might, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Fairweather: Did the minister not say that?

Mr. Lamontagne: No, I do not think so. I wrote a letter to each provincial minister responsible for centennial projects, and I think the content of that letter was very clear indeed.

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

QUEBEC—ADMINISTRATION OF ESKIMO AFFAIRS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. L. J. Pigeon (Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a specific question in French to the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

[*Translation*]

Since federal officials, as confirmed by Mr. Rene Levesque, have the Eskimos of Fort Chimo sign a petition objecting to the transfer of jurisdiction, can the minister state whether the administration of Eskimo affairs will remain under federal jurisdiction?

[*Text*]

Hon. Arthur Laing (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources): Mr. Speaker, I want first of all to thank the hon. member for his courtesy in providing me with a copy of his question. In the light of the fact that we are meeting representatives of

[Mr. Bell.]

the Quebec government tomorrow, I have prepared an answer which I propose to read.

In reply to the first part of the question, Mr. Speaker, no such petition was circulated by federal administrators and none was received by the minister. The provision by the federal government of schools, health services and other measures for the advancement of the Eskimo resident in the Ungava region of Quebec has been pursuant to a decision by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1939 that the federal government has the same special constitutional responsibility for Eskimos as it has for Indians.

The government of Quebec recently indicated a desire to provide the services that the federal government has been providing as a part of its general administrative responsibilities in the province. Any agreement with the province to this end would include conditions for the protection of the rights of the Eskimos, particularly in relation to schools.

The government of Canada is prepared to make such an agreement with Quebec. This accords with the general objective of the federal government in relation to Indian affairs. If the governments of Canada and Quebec can reach agreement on the terms of a transfer of administration, it would then be necessary to consult with the Eskimos themselves. No change of administration can take place until they have had an opportunity to express their views. This was the unanimous opinion of the governments of the provinces in relation to Indian administration at the federal-provincial conference in November, 1963.

ALASKA HIGHWAY—INQUIRY AS TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH UNITED STATES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Bert Leboe (Cariboo): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works. He has not had anybody bothering him today. Could he make a report now, or perhaps in a day or two, on the progress that is being made in connection with the paving of the Alaska highway and the negotiations with the United States?

Hon. J. P. Deschatelets (Minister of Public Works): I would prefer to take this question as notice, Mr. Speaker.

INQUIRIES OF THE MINISTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): I wonder if I may ask the Prime Minister a question based upon a statement by the United States government that it intended to discontinue