

Inquiries of the Ministry
YOUTH

CANCELLATION OF CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY CANADIAN COUNCIL ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): My question is for the Acting Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the conference on services to transient youth and student summer unemployment scheduled for March 14, 15 and 16, has been cancelled because of the lack of federal government assistance, can the Acting Prime Minister say why the government has made this unexpected decision at such a late date and what alternatives the government is considering?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): As I said in reply to some questions the other day, the government has been consulting with the provinces about a program for student employment. It seemed to us that the conference that was to be held might be a very useful affair, but we did not think that it would be a good use of the taxpayers' money to finance it.

Mr. Nystrom: Can the Acting Prime Minister say whether or not this decision was made in light of the fact that the government feared there might be destructive criticism at the conference?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Can the Acting Prime Minister indicate whether or not, in consultation with the Canadian Council on Social Development earlier, the government had in fact asked that this conference be postponed for one month in order that it could actively participate and support this conference in March?

Mr. Sharp: I think this question should be directed to the minister concerned. I did not participate in the decision-making.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): In light of the fact that this important conference on transient youth and student summer employment, a subject in which the government has professed interest in the past two weeks, is of major importance, there seems to be some conflict in the information that has been given the House with respect to the question, and I wonder—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the hon. member kindly ask his supplementary question?

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Would the Acting Prime Minister agree to table the correspondence between the government and the Canadian Council on Social Development with respect to this conference in order that the full facts of the situation might be known?

Mr. Sharp: I can assure the hon. member that the government has nothing to hide. I will speak to the minister and see if that can be arranged.

[Mr. Sharp.]

URBAN AFFAIRS

SUGGESTED FINANCIAL AID TO MUNICIPALITIES BECAUSE OF EXTRAORDINARY SNOW REMOVAL COSTS

Mr. Raymond Rock (Lachine): I have a question for the Acting Prime Minister. Since snowfalls this year in many areas of Canada are at a record high, abnormal, and in many cases catastrophic, would the government consider giving financial aid to municipalities which are overspending their snow removal budgets?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): I do not think that the government of Canada would consider that particular request, but let me point out that it is providing indirectly some very substantial assistance which I think will help the municipalities to meet their budgetary expenditures.

* * *

HOUSING

STATUS OF MORTGAGE ON ROCHDALE COLLEGE

Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton): My question is for the Minister without Portfolio in charge of housing. On January 21 I asked the minister a question with respect to Rochdale College in Toronto, whether they are behind in their payments and what is the government's intention? The minister replied:

I will be making a more elaborate statement on that situation in the not too distant future. In the meantime I can advise the House that the mortgagee met the payments in the last three months consecutively.

On February 24 the President of CMHC—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the hon. member. The question should be put as briefly as possible, and I hope that the hon. member can ask his question soon.

Mr. Scott: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am coming to the point. On February 24 the President of CMHC told the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee that Toronto Rochdale College is \$289,000 in arrears, sufficiently behind for the corporation to take steps—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That is not a question. The hon. member is going over the background of the matter which he wishes to bring to the attention of the minister. It seems to me that there must be some way to ask the question in a more succinct fashion.

Mr. Scott: Can the minister inform the House if any action has been taken on this matter?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister without Portfolio): This situation involves many jurisdictions. It involves, of course, CMHC and its financial responsibilities. It involves problems of law and order in Toronto. It involves problems of the other creditors of Rochdale. It involves the provincial government. I think it is only responsible that we recognize that unilateral action may not be the wisest course, and indeed consultations with