

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Diefenbaker: No.

Mr. Speaker: The right hon. gentleman says no. I am just saying this is my impression.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The minister may be indulging in that sort of thing. He is playing with the rights of the western farmers and doing nothing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

HOUSING**MEASURES TO COUNTERACT DECLINE IN URBAN DWELLING STARTS**

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister without Portfolio in charge of housing. Will the minister be announcing soon any steps proposed by the government to counteract the alarming decline of nearly 40 per cent in dwelling unit starts in urban centres for the month of January, as just announced by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, I think I announced some significant steps that the government plans when I tabled the CMHC budget on February 2 with an increase of \$174 million. This will provide for a substantial increase in housing starts for the sector of the market that is really in trouble—the low income sector.

AIR TRANSPORT**AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE AND PARTS FOR AIRCRAFT PURCHASED BY GOVERNMENT**

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): Merci beaucoup, monsieur l'Orateur. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Supply and Services. In view of the Canadian government purchase of four Boeing 707 aircraft at a cost of \$56 million, will the minister please state where he plans to service these airplanes and whether there are parts for this make of aircraft available in Canada?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker: I think the question is out of order and should be put on the order paper.

[*English*]

Mr. Paproski: Une question supplémentaire, monsieur l'Orateur. Is the minister aware that the aircraft design that he has purchased is 12 years old?

INDIAN AFFAIRS**HAY LAKES—ALLEGED MISUSE OF BAND FUNDS BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS—DEATHS ON STURGEON LAKE RESERVE**

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Has the minister been advised of the allegations made by Chief Harry Chonkoyal of the band council of the Hay Lakes band of Indians of irregularities in the use of band funds by government officials, including the use of blank resolution forms and the use of this money in part for private industry and also for provincial purposes?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of this alleged charge made by the chief, but I can assure the hon. member that I shall inquire immediately, and if irregularities have been committed by some of my department's officials, they will be punished accordingly.

[*English*]

Mr. Baldwin: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister request his colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, who is to spend a few hours covering all of northern Alberta at the end of this week and the beginning of next week, to inquire into this allegation? Would he also ask him to inquire into the situation with regard to the Indians on the Sturgeon Lake reserve where in the last two months seven pre-school children have died, five having been suffocated in a fire and two having died from starvation and being frozen to death? Would the minister ask his colleague to make inquiries into the situation there?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, this last question was asked in the House last fall and we answered it. As far as the first question asked by the hon. member is concerned, this is a problem that comes under the purview of my department and I shall look after it immediately. It does not come under the jurisdiction of my colleague the Minister of National Health and Welfare.