

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)):** Mr. Speaker, I am rather surprised at the comments of the hon. member for Lac Saint-Jean. He ought to know that our position in January was the same as it was on December 20. We still support strengthening and clarifying GATT article XI. It is a vital measure that has allowed our marketing boards to operate for years.

The Canadian position was a joint effort. We prepared that position with Canadian farm leaders. I have on many occasions met with farm producers, even in the hon. member's riding, where I had a chance to visit quite often. I have met practically all the producers in his riding. Quebec producers especially are in a position to know that we defend the interests of Quebec producers and that we will continue to do so. There is nothing to be worried about on that score.

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean):** What matters, Mr. Speaker, is the final position. And the final position is that this government accepted the Dunkel Report, while expressing some mild disappointment about parts it found less palatable. Mr. Speaker, the minister knows perfectly well this about-face will dismantle crop insurance and the mechanisms for setting prices for milk, eggs and poultry.

The minister knows perfectly well this will cost farm producers in Quebec at least \$350 million over the next six years. So tearing up his shirt is just not enough, and the minister should tell the House what he intends to do to save thousands of Quebec producers from disaster.

**Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)):** Mr. Speaker, as far as about-faces are concerned, I think the hon. member is quite knowledgeable on that score. I don't need any lessons from him.

Mr. Speaker, Canada's position has not changed. Canada did not accept the Dunkel report. When the hon. member says what he said just now, he is mistaken. I don't think he did it on purpose. He was probably misinformed. We are defending the interests of farm producers, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue to do so. And I think the hon. member should stop spreading information which, as he knows perfectly well, does not reflect the real situation, Mr. Speaker.

## INDIAN AFFAIRS

**Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Argenteuil—Papineau):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. During the Oka crisis in 1990, the regional director at the time signed a letter committing the government to acquiring the properties located in the Jardins d'Oka and south of Highway 344. Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister realizes my constituents are upset because they have yet to receive a formal proposal for dealing with the serious psychological and financial problems they experienced as a result of the invasion of their property and land by masked warriors.

Could the minister confirm he is about to submit proposals to these owners and to the municipality of the village of Oka? And when will he do so?

[English]

**Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, first I would like to compliment the hon. member for Argenteuil—Papineau for the diligent work she has done, together with the Minister of State for Indian Affairs, to seek a solution to this very difficult problem.

I can confirm that indeed a very creative proposal has been brought together by our officials and is presently being discussed among the four parties to an agreement with respect to the land issues at Kanesatake and Oka. I believe this proposal will be of great benefit to the land owners she speaks of and to the Mohawk community at Kanesatake.

• (1500)

As soon as the preliminary discussions are completed, further details will be forthcoming.

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[Translation]

## HOME OWNERSHIP

**Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

In the Montreal area, the total number of housing starts has dropped 15 per cent, compared with last year. Yesterday the government co-opted a proposal made by the Leader of the Opposition when it announced that it was reducing the downpayment required to buy a first house from 10 to 5 per cent.