

*Oral Questions***CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION**

VACANT HOUSES IN KITCHENER

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Housing. As he is aware, Canada Mortgage and Housing owns some 80 townhouses in the city of Kitchener, Ontario, which have been sitting empty for about eight years because the housing was built on top of a garbage and landfill site and methane gas has been leaking into the houses.

I went to Kitchener a few weeks ago and took a look at the houses and the site. The Member for Kitchener said that he would "never in good conscience recommend to his child to move in there", and that in his opinion "the complex should be bulldozed".

Will the Minister agree that in the interests of public safety those houses should be bulldozed and the area cleaned up?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (International Trade) and Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear that CMHC did not build these units. They were zoned by the municipality and permitted to be built back, I believe, in 1974-75. In 1976 it was found out that methane gas was seeping from an adjacent property. I do not believe the complex is built on top of the land site but is adjacent to it.

CMHC's position has always been that until the appropriate authorities signify what a safe level of methane gas is, it will not allow these properties to be occupied. CMHC is working with the provincial, municipal, and regional Governments to come to a decision on what the safe level might be. CMHC is also examining ways of taking methane gas away from the area. But I can tell the Hon. Member that no one will move into the units that CMHC owns until safe levels have been set. I do not think bulldozing at this time is the answer.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER VISIT SITE

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the same Minister. The reason I went to see that site was to see for myself what kind of condition the site was in and also to talk to people in the surrounding area. I want to suggest to the Minister that the housing is actually built on top of a garbage dump and that is from where the methane gas is coming.

Let me suggest to the Minister that he himself should visit the site and take a look around it. If the Minister wants, I would be quite happy to go with him at that time.

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (International Trade) and Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy the company of my hon. friend, whether we are flying back and forth to our ridings in Toronto.

This matter has been drawn to my attention by the Hon. Member for Kitchener and the Hon. Member for Waterloo (Mr. McLean).

I hope to get there in the not too distant future and look at that particular project. If I do, I will be more than happy to have the Hon. Member accompany me.

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● (1150)

INDIAN AFFAIRSBARRIERE LAKE INDIAN BAND—DEMONSTRATION ON
PARLIAMENT HILL

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. On Wednesday, 16 members of the Barriere Lake Algonquin Indian Band were arrested and their tents were dismantled and seized after they had set them up on Parliament Hill. This removal of the Barriere Lake Algonquins symbolizes what is happening in their home territory which is being threatened by clear-cut logging.

Why has the Prime Minister, or at least the Minister of Indian Affairs, not been willing to meet with these people to work out with them a plan by which together they could meet with the Quebec Government and ensure that their traditional way of life will not be destroyed?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism) and Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member had done his homework and had looked at what we did, he would have realized that I met twice with the Chief and his representative in a period of two days, without notice. I have offered the Indian Band in question our full support in contacting the Government of Quebec, which the Hon. Member should understand has jurisdiction over the lands in question.

I have personally talked to my Quebec colleague, Minister Savoie, with regard to setting up a meeting with the Indians, and I am informed this morning by the Member of Parliament for the area involved that in fact they are on their way to Quebec to meet with the provincial Minister.

The issue has been handled. We have offered our support and we will do whatever we can to help the Barriere Lake Indian Band solve the problem.

REQUEST THAT TENTS SEIZED BY POLICE BE RELEASED

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands): Mr. Speaker, what the Minister of State has said was clearly not enough to satisfy the Barriere Lake Indians who felt themselves driven to the extreme measure of having to set up camp on Parliament Hill on Wednesday. These are desperate people.

I would ask the Minister if he would at least ensure that the tents are released so that the people can go fall hunting. Will the Government support their request for an eight-month