

Oral Questions

Minister correctly quoted, and perhaps he can give us the advantages of his musings in the House?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, as a former journalist perhaps I have the humility of saying that there are times when journalists get their writing garbled and, in fact, misrepresent what someone has said in a rather lengthy interview. This was the case.

• (1450)

Under no circumstances did I advocate that people should pay rent on the basis of their income. There was discussion on the issue of availability of rental units, and I did reflect to the journalist those reasons which the industry had given me for not going ahead and building as many rental units as we might need in the country. We then went on to discuss rent control, and I indicated very clearly that this was a provincial jurisdiction, that it was not my judgment to make, but that surely there could be a way to help people concerning affordability of housing, that is, to help those who perhaps were paying more than 30 per cent of their income, as we had done in the mortgage renewal plan that my predecessor brought in some time ago.

I flatly denied in Vancouver having advocated what the Hon. Member represents in his question. I flatly deny it again, and I am simply saying that we will try to give Canadians as many houses and apartments that are affordable as possible.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McGrath: I was merely quoting from a story in the Toronto *Star*, which is not in the habit of misquoting Government Ministers.

Some Hon. Members: Since when?

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CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

INCREASE IN DIRECTORS' FEES

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, concerning the subject of low-income families, the Minister just voted in this House on a provision to hold Family Allowances and Old Age Pensions to the six and five formula. How can he reconcile that with a 200 per cent increase in directors' fees for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation? Directors' fees have now risen from \$150 a day to \$450 a day.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McGrath: How can the Minister reconcile that with a Government policy which would hold families and old age pensioners in this country to an iniquitous six and five formula?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, on the first question, I checked the tape of the

interview and I can assure the Hon. Member that there were no gaps of 18 minutes or less on the tape that I checked. So, I very clearly stand by the statement that I made concerning the whole rent control issue.

Concerning the other matter, the new fee schedule was submitted in April of 1982, on April 28 to be precise. I might say to Hon. Members that the directors of CMHC have not received any kind of increase in their fees since 1946. I suspect that Hon. Members of his House have seen substantial increases in their own salaries over a period of 37 years.

I might say that the limited number of directors on this board, dealing with very large amounts of money, make them entitled to the normal fees of officers of other Crown corporations who, I suspect, in many cases discharge less responsibilities than these directors do. It was a matter of judgment, but I also think—and in this I appeal to all Members of the House—that it may very well have been a matter of fairness.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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FISHERIES

WEST COAST HERRING ROE FISHERY

Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The Government is proposing a scheme on the West Coast which will allow one seine vessel to fish two areas under the herring roe fishery this coming March. The effect of that proposal will be to throw 200 fishermen, crewmen on those seine vessels, out of work.

In view of the representation by the Native Brotherhood of B.C. and the UFAWU, both organizations representing crewmen on those same vessels, will the Minister reject proposals coming up through his Department and, indeed, protect those 200 jobs in a Province which already sees 250,000 people out of work? Will the Minister protect those jobs, or is this the first phase of implementing the Pearse Report which calls for a reduction by 50 per cent in the number of fishermen in the B.C. fishing industry?

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, I will certainly very carefully study the representations of the Hon. Member, but surely he should realize that when we shorten the fishing season or reduce the number of entrants, participants in the fishing industry, it is precisely in order to manage the resource in a responsible fashion. Sure, we could allow as many fishermen to fish as he would like, but next year I could not perform miracles and make the species reproduce, and then, of course, we would have to face the consequences.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): This is the parable of the loaves and the fishes.