

feel it prudent that the Government of Canada should make further guarantees of further loans to Canadair?

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, we all know how important Canadair is to the Canadian aerospace industry and what a marvelous product it has been able to develop in the new Challenger jet. I am surprised at the implication of the question from the hon. member.

An hon. Member: Why don't you answer the question?

Mr. Blenkarn: Madam Speaker, my question was to the President of the Treasury Board. I am surprised he did not answer with respect to the prudence of the loan.

Bearing in mind the government problem that he got into with respect to Consolidated Computer Incorporated, and bearing in mind the advice he received from the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce with respect to the viability of that corporation, and bearing in mind the study of the Enterprise Development Board that he has before him, I would ask the minister, then, is he going to have a full study of the Enterprise Development Board and Canadair, is he going to table the Canadair statement, and is he going to table new projections with respect to Canadair, to indicate that we are not going to have another Consolidated Computer on our hands as might be indicated by the information he now has with him.

Mr. Johnston: Madam Speaker, as the hon. member knows, when guarantees are brought forward they will be the subject of supplementary estimates in this House. Then he will have ample opportunity to raise all his questions with the responsible ministers in Committee.

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HOUSING

ADVICE FOR FIRST TIME HOME BUYERS

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the minister responsible for housing. Tomorrow the minister will be addressing a seminar sponsored by one of the largest real estate agencies in the country, the theme of which is creative financing and the legal obligations of home buying. I would like to ask the minister responsible for housing, as we face another serious shortfall this year in housing starts, which could go as high as 70,000 by the minister's own projection, as we face continuous high interest rates, which could see mortgages continue to escalate around the 20 per cent mark, which means of course that the minister, by his policies, is contributing to housing inflation, would the minister tell the House what advice he proposes to offer to first time home buyers, tomorrow?

Oral Questions

Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, at this time last year when housing starts were at a five-year high, seasonally adjusted for the month of March, somewhere around 242,500, it was interesting that there was no question from the learned member who has just asked that question. That was a time of prosperity. He cannot stand the improvement in the housing situation and which is so important. Last year, for the first time in five years, we had that improvement in the number of housing starts, one year over the last. As I indicated, I hope that that strength in the industry will be reflected in this year's production.

One of the things I do intend to say to the other panelists and to people who may attend is that I hope they will encourage members opposite, some of those who supported Bill C-89 last evening, and those of the New Democratic Party who voted against them, that if they would support Bill C-89 there are provisions in it to assist Canadians looking for a first time purchase of a home.

An hon. Member: He is the next candidate for parliamentary secretary.

NUMBER OF UNITS TO BE FINANCED UNDER BILL C-89

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, it seems entirely appropriate that the minister would be speaking to a seminar sponsored by a real estate company, because it is only the real estate companies and the banks that are benefiting from the government's housing policies. I would like to ask the minister this question. This morning, on the "Canada AM" program, the minister indicated that the 15,000 apartment units which would benefit from the bill now before the House, Bill C-89, is only a floor, only a minimum. That is the first time the minister has given the House that information.

An hon. Member: He did not give it in the House.

Mr. McGrath: May I ask the minister what he considers to be the total number of units to be financed under Bill C-89, since the 15,000 mentioned in the bill is only a minimum?

Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, I welcome the obviously serious question by the critic for housing from the official opposition.

An hon. Member: Give a serious answer, then.

Mr. Cosgrove: I invite him in the same spirit to look at page 14, paragraph 4 of the document that was tabled with the budget, called "Budget in More Detail", which sets out in further detail the fact that the \$350 million allocated to assist in the production of affordable rental accommodation is intended to do that. It is intended to be a start for 15,000 and, if there is a surplus, to assist in further production during the later period of this year or next year.