

Inquiries of the Ministry

who are unemployed at Elliot Lake, and if something could not be done for the unemployed in my riding. Surely they are as important as the people who reside in Algoma East.

Mr. Speaker: Order. This is not the time for debate.

REPORTED DECREASE IN CONSTRUCTION IN
ATLANTIC AREA

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Postmaster General): On Tuesday last the hon. member for Pictou asked me, as the minister who reports to this house on behalf of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, about a reported decrease of 23 per cent in housing construction in the Atlantic region.

I believe, after checking, that the figure to which the hon. member referred relates to the number of dwellings under construction in urban centres at the end of April. Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation have assured me, since the question was asked, that the volume of housing construction in urban centres in the Atlantic region so far this year was substantially higher than a year ago, due in part, of course, to the winter housing program.

The actual figures are as follows. The number of dwellings brought to completion in the Atlantic region, during the period in question, totalled 1,302 units in the first four months of the year as compared with 835 units in the corresponding period in 1963, an increase of 55.9 per cent. The corporation has also assured me that while during the same period, that is the period when completions were up substantially, housing starts in the same region were down somewhat as compared with the previous year, the figures for May show an increase of 5.4 per cent over the corresponding month of last year.

Mr. H. Russell MacEwan (Pictou): May I express the hope that the reports of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation are clarified before being given to the press in future.

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): May I ask the Postmaster General what arrangements he has been able to make to assist the unemployed workers from the Point Edward naval base to pay their rent?

Mr. Nicholson: I will take the question as notice.

[Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria).]

URANIUM

REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN FORM OF U.K. CONTRACT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. A. Webb (Hastings-Frontenac): I have a question for the Prime Minister. It seems that the present contract forms in connection with the United Kingdom's offer to purchase 1,200,000 pounds of uranium oxide are so worded that only the wealthy Consolidated Mines and Denison Mines can tender on these contracts. Will the Prime Minister have new contracts prepared in order that our own, small, wholly Canadian companies can tender on this contract?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the offer was made in terms which did not discriminate against any producing mine.

[Later:]

Mr. Webb: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Prime Minister whether representation has been made to him or to the department by representatives of the smaller mines, stating that due to the wording of the present tender forms for the uranium it would be impossible for these small firms to tender?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I have received representations. The offer made to the producing mines was in a form to ensure that the maximum amount of employment would result from the successful bidder.

TRANSPORT

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY—REQUEST FOR REPORT ON TOLL INVESTIGATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Albert): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport, and may I say that we are all delighted to see him back in his place so relaxed after his family holiday in the United Kingdom. In view of the statement which was made yesterday about seaway revenues, will the minister give an interim report, as he said he would, before July 1, the deadline for the investigation of tolls on the seaway? Will he also tell us how the investigation is coming on alongside that of the United States and what we may expect in the way of further hearings?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): I very much hope to be able to make a report before the deadline. I thank the hon.