

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs): Madam Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that we are doing everything possible to accelerate the question of allocation or whatever the pension is. I do not know the particular case about which he is talking, but I can take care of it if he wants to give me the information. But he must understand that sometimes it is not always the fault of the pension board or the fault of veterans. Sometimes some of the veterans do not know exactly how to get to the proper pension board. We can help them if they want to come to us.

BACKLOG OF CASES BEFORE PENSION REVIEW BOARD—CALL
FOR MINISTER'S RESIGNATION

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs. There is a backlog of serious proportions before the Pension Review Board, and many veterans are dying before their claims are processed. As the two previous ministers of veterans affairs were making progress in clearing up this problem, and as things have gone from bad to worse under the minister's direction, is he now prepared to resign and let another minister take his place so that this serious, shocking matter will be cleared up in the department?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Don't answer it.

Madam Speaker: The hon. member for Vancouver East.

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HOUSING

IMPACT OF MARKET ON HIGH INTEREST RATES AND REAL
ESTATE PRICES

Mrs. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Recently the minister told a convention of the HUDAC group that there was no need for government intervention because normal market forces would bring forth a balance of housing supply and demand. Will the minister explain what magic market myth will reduce 16 per cent mortgage interest rates and control the exploding price of real estate in cities such as Vancouver?

Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, in response to the hon. member's question I need go no further than the city in which she resides and has given as an example. Although prices have been very high and have escalated dramatically in the last year in the city of Vancouver, the market has responded and the starts for housing in that city in the last quarter of last year were an all-time record. This is an example of the action of the market responding to internal pressures.

Oral Questions

Mrs. Mitchell: Madam Speaker, obviously the minister has not checked out the prices of those houses; no person can afford a first house in Vancouver. Will the minister delay his ongoing love-in with the real estate industry long enough to meet with people in northern Newfoundland who have desperate housing conditions and need a decentralized home repair program like the one he just cancelled?

Mr. Cosgrove: Madam Speaker, again I think the hon. member is mistaken; no program was cancelled. I assume the reference concerns the change in the delivery agent of the rehabilitation program in the province to which she referred. I really think she does no service to the corporation, to the people served, or even to the people we felt were not doing a good job, to put the case in that kind of language.

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NATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM

MULTINATIONAL OIL COMPANIES MOVING TO MEET CANADIAN
OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the importance the government placed on the Canadianization of the petroleum industry in the National Energy Program, could the minister confirm press reports of last evening that at least seven multinational oil companies, including Getty, Murphy, Suncor, Ultramar, Gulf, Shell and Mobil, are all moving rapidly to meet the government's Canadian ownership requirements?

● (1500)

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, the government has welcomed, as I think most Canadians have, with the exception of a few Conservatives, the moves taken over the last few weeks whereby Dome Petroleum has agreed to become a Canadian company and whereby Petrofina now belongs to all Canadians.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lalonde: I know there are several foreign-held companies which are now having discussions with private parties in Canada in order substantially to increase Canadian ownership in the oil and gas industry, thereby helping Canadians to own and control the industry well before 1990. We welcome those developments. I hope that a large number of companies will, indeed, abide by the objectives set out in the program and that very soon we will have a much larger base of Canadian ownership than we have had in the past.