

*Statements by Ministers***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSEROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT—REPORT OF
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane-Superior): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the report, in Canada's two official languages, of the Legislative Committee on Bill C-65, an Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and other Acts in consequence thereof.

STRIKING COMMITTEE—FIFTEENTH REPORT OF STANDING
COMMITTEE

Mr. Scott Fennell (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table the fifteenth report of the Striking Committee in both official languages.

[Translation]

PETROLEUM AND GAS REVENUE TAX ACT, INCOME TAX ACT—
REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Richard Grisé (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the legislative committee, I have the honour to present our report on Bill C-82, an Act to amend the Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax Act and the Income Tax Act, without amendment, in both official languages.

[Editor's Note: For text of above reports, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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[English]

CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATIONREVIEW OF HOUSING PROGRAMS—STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF
LABOUR

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to describe to the House this afternoon new initiatives resulting from a review of the housing policies of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation which represent a national direction for housing solutions. These changes in direction are the result of an extensive process of policy review and consultation with interested groups, the private sector and the provinces.

Shifting needs and priorities require that Governments re-examine their policies, however comfortable it may be to continue with the *status quo*.

The housing programs now in place have succeeded in adding considerably to the stock of housing available to Canadians in almost all income groups. At the same time, many of these programs have become enormously expensive and, while expanding the housing options of middle-income Canadians, have had an unacceptably modest success in help-

ing those lower income Canadians who must look to Government for affordable housing.

On assuming responsibility for CMHC, I asked that current policies be reviewed to determine their effectiveness in dealing with the major areas of need. I wanted this re-examination to draw on the experience of all Canadians who work with CMHC to deliver housing, build and market the housing, and receive housing, and all those who have acquired an expertise in the field of social housing policy.

In January of this year I released a consultation paper setting out what were seen as the three main challenges facing us. Those challenges were: the need to establish clear objectives for federal housing policies and programs; the establishment of clear priorities for federal housing expenditures; and the requirement that programs achieve our objectives in a cost efficient manner.

I met extensively with social housing and rehabilitation groups, industry and mortgage lending associations and organizations representing the poor, the elderly, the disabled and aboriginal peoples. They all participated in the consultations. The consultation process was open to any group or individual who wished to participate. We have had the benefit of many views and perspectives. I thank and acknowledge those groups for their contributions, for their dedication to the Government and to providing social housing, and the time and effort they spent during the consultation process.

● (1530)

At the same time we were engaged in intensive discussions with the provinces. If the provinces and the federal Government work together and pool resources, we will be able to eliminate areas of duplication and a greater proportion of Canadians will benefit from the programs established.

My Parliamentary Secretary and I met personally with some 21 groups active in housing. In October, my staff and senior federal housing officials met with some 15 groups. I received over 300 written responses, including 50 briefs and 250 letters. Furthermore, over the past year, over 70 federal-provincial meetings on housing have been held. This includes two conferences of federal, provincial and territorial housing Ministers. I also meet bilaterally with each of my provincial and territorial counterparts.

As well, I benefited from a review of federal housing programs carried out by a task force set up by my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen). Many of its conclusions were similar to ours and are reflected in the new policies. The social housing directions I will now describe are based upon the points of consensus which emerged from these consultations. The major changes relate to the mix of social housing programs and those assisted under them, to the participation of the provinces, and to the role of co-operative housing.

First, the federal Government will provide a new package of social housing programs with all assistance directed to households in need, that is, all those who are unable to obtain affordable, suitable and adequate accommodation in the pri-