

Oral Questions

should be adequate funding available. I cannot comment on the availability of funds which might be diverted from Cuba into Canadian housing. That would have to be taken up with my colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

[Translation]

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell the House why loans are granted to foreign countries at lower interest rates than those charged to Canadian taxpayers, and will he make representations to his colleagues in the Cabinet to get funds for his department at the same conditions?

[English]

Mr. Danson: I fully support the policy of the government in helping developing nations. I think we must look at these two issues separately. I am certainly anxious to get as much funding for housing as possible, but I do not relate the two questions directly.

* * *

FINANCE**ALLEGED STATEMENT BY MINISTER CANADA WOULD WELCOME ARAB MONEY—POSSIBLE CHANGE IN POLICY**

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): A question to the Acting Minister of Finance. Reports from the Middle East in the last few days suggest the Minister of Finance is telling the countries he is visiting that Canada would welcome Arab money. Does this represent a policy change on the part of the government?

Hon. C. M. Drury (Acting Minister of Finance): I do not think so, Mr. Speaker. Canada has generally been receptive to investment from abroad. The House is well aware that the means by which we have successfully financed our balance of payments account for a number of years is through the inflow of capital from abroad. The Minister of Finance is simply reiterating a statement which has often been made here.

POSSIBILITY OF USING ARAB MONEY FOR HOUSING—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): A supplementary to the Secretary of State for Urban Affairs. Given the fact the Minister of Finance is now saying that Canada would welcome Arab investment in this country, will the hon. gentleman renew his request to the Minister of Finance that he be allowed to negotiate a loan of one billion dollars from the Arabs to help finance housing in Canada?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): I would expect the Minister of Finance to use his wisdom as he has done in the past to make certain there are adequate funds available for our housing program.

● (1150)

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of State for Urban Affairs then think that when the Minister of Finance turned down the request to use Arab funds to

[Mr. Danson.]

finance housing he was using the wisdom to which the minister refers?

Mr. Danson: Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is any question of turning down funds. I should like to point out, however, that there appears to be adequate funding in Canada from the national money lending institutions at this time. I would urge Canadians to take advantage of the legislation we have passed. I think this is rather important in this case because there were a number of important legislative items passed. Perhaps this was a month or two too late, because of the length of time it took to get these through the committee and the House, but it is important that we take advantage of the funds which the banks are prepared to lend.

As the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge has indicated, we are doing everything possible to make certain that these rates are brought down to the lowest possible level. There are funds available. I have spoken with the lending institutions and with CMHC, and I am satisfied at this time that there are adequate funds in Canada for Canadians to build the number of homes we need this year.

* * *

AIR TRANSPORT**AIR STEWARDESSES—INQUIRY AS TO ARRANGEMENTS RELATING TO PREGNANCY**

Mr. F. A. Philbrook (Halton): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Transport whether he is making any progress with the problem regarding pregnant airline stewardesses and their right to work, at least on ground duty if not on flight duty, or being entitled to full financial compensation. I address this question to the Minister of Transport although it might also be of interest to the Minister of National Health and Welfare and perhaps even the Minister of Labour.

An hon. Member: Obviously, there has already been some progress.

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I know we are making some progress because there are fewer pregnant hostesses than there were a month ago.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Without joking, I think we can make some arrangement. We have found out that it is very difficult to have a general rule covering all these cases. We know that many of them can keep active for sometime before they have to be released.

An hon. Member: Tell that to the airline pilots.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): There have to be judgments made in each of these cases, and with the help of the Department of National Health and Welfare I think we can solve the problem.