

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

## INQUIRY AS TO CHANGE IN SITTING HOURS

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Peel): I should like to direct a question to the acting leader of the government having to do with matters closer to home. Has the government given consideration to the point raised before the Easter recess in regard to changing the sitting hours of the house?

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Acting Prime Minister): The government has given the matter some consideration and has decided to postpone further consideration until the dean of the house has returned to his duties here.

## HOUSING

## CURTAILMENT OF UNESSENTIAL CONSTRUCTION TO PERMIT COMPLETION OF VETERANS' HOUSES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. K. FRASER (Peterborough West): I should like to ask the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply whether consideration has been given to curtailing unessential building so that hundreds of partly completed veterans' houses across Canada may be finished without further delay in regard to such materials as nails, lath and lumber.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I would ask hon. members to be brief and to the point when putting questions on the orders of the day.

Mr. FRASER: May I have an answer? I am referring to the hundreds of houses partly constructed.

Mr. G. J. McILRAITH (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply): I can easily answer part of the question, but it is difficult to find just what portion of the hon. member's fairly lengthy statement forms the question. It has to do with the shortage of building materials which does exist at present. Continuous consideration has been given this problem, and to enable veterans to complete their houses a system of priorities has been worked out for housing materials for veterans, which has been announced regularly from time to time. That system is in operation at present. I do not know what more I can say at this time by way of answer to the question. It would require a long statement to cover the matter fully.

Mr. FRASER: My question is whether consideration is being given to the curtailment of unessential building.

## SUPPLY

## FLOOD CONTROL—FEED GRAIN SUBSIDIES—VACANCY IN HALIFAX CONSTITUENCY—STATEMENT OF MR. BRACKEN

Hon. DOUGLAS ABBOTT (Minister of Finance) moved that the house go into committee of supply.

Mr. JOHN BRACKEN (Leader of the Opposition): A few days ago the acting leader of the government (Mr. St. Laurent) indicated that each Monday, by a motion to go into committee of supply, hon. members would be given an opportunity to raise questions they might consider to be important and which had not been dealt with or finally decided. I am aware that a number of hon. gentlemen propose to bring up different matters. I want to mention only three, and I shall deal with them very briefly.

The first matter I wish to bring up is one which has been presented to us every day recently from different parts of Canada. I refer to the damage arising from floods in various sections of the country. It is the question of flood control and conservation. As hon. members know, we have on the statute book the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, a measure which has gone a very long way toward the rehabilitation of some of the drier sections of western Canada. I believe it is generally accepted throughout the nation that this is a wise and constructive policy. Events of the last few days in different parts of Canada indicate that legislation of this kind should be extended, and that this sort of policy should be provided for other places. Today one reads that almost in the centre of the dry belt of the prairies floods are doing serious damage not only to farms but also to farm buildings and to urban centres. I am referring particularly to the valley of the Saskatchewan near the city of Saskatoon. The newspapers are full of reports of the flood damage in western Ontario. For two or three days last week I had the opportunity to see something of the damage done by floods along the Grand river, the Thames, the Sydenham, and other rivers in that district. As I witnessed that damage it occurred to me that one of the greatest opportunities to do a permanent job of reconstruction is before the province of Ontario and the Dominion of Canada, in the immediate initiation of a well-rounded out policy of conservation for that area.

Within a mile of this building we can see some of the damage that has been done in the valley of the Rideau, right in the suburbs of this city. It will be said that a problem of this kind falls primarily upon the provinces. By a