

Oral Questions

Mr. Muir: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister's reply was most unfortunate. May I ask if it represents a final decision? Has the door not been left open for further discussions for the elimination of this terrible taxation that is being enforced?

Mr. Buchanan: Mr. Speaker, around here one should never say that the door is totally closed. However, I indicated our present intent.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

SEARCH FOR MISSING HELICOPTER EN ROUTE TO YUKON,
JUNE 1 LAST

Mr. Alex Patterson (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Defence. Can the minister report to the House on the progress of the search for a missing helicopter containing two people, one from Abbotsford, B.C., and one from Woodstock, Ontario, which crashed while flying from Fort Nelson, B.C., to Watson Lake, Yukon Territory, on June 1?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the hon. member for giving me notice of his intention to seek this information. A very extensive search has been carried out in British Columbia and the Yukon for Mr. Fred Young and his passenger. More than 58,000 square miles have been covered visually, plus 41,000 square miles electronically, involving a total of 474 flying hours. On June 11, intensive search activity was reduced but all aircraft flying in the area have been advised to stay on the alert and in that way to continue the search.

Mr. Patterson: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the great public concern over this matter, and as previous searches which had been called off were reinstated with beneficial results, will the minister consider ordering the resumption of full-scale search procedures in that area, in the hope of locating the survivors?

● (1440)

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, the regional control centre in Victoria has advised that the entire area has been thoroughly searched. Therefore, the intensive search will not be continued unless there is some new evidence. But I can assure the hon. member that any new evidence will be very promptly investigated. As I have indicated, all aircraft, including a British Columbia chartered helicopter that is in the area, have been asked to stay on the alert and to continue the search.

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HEALTH

ACTION TAKEN BY MINISTER IN LIGHT OF EVIDENCE BEFORE
INQUIRY THAT TAINTED MEAT SOLD IN 1972

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. It is based on evidence given at the Quebec crime

inquiry by the former head of the Montreal food inspection service. That gentleman is now employed by the federal government. He testified under oath that he notified the RCMP in 1973, following notice that had already been given to the Quebec Provincial Police, that there were at least ten firms, and he named them, in the province of Quebec that were selling meat unfit for human consumption. In light of that information that was given to the RCMP, why did the minister not take action under the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I did not have the opportunity to see the statement the hon. member is referring to. All I can say, however, is that this statement confirms exactly what I have always said in this House, which is that our own inspectors who had made an inquiry suspected that there were illegal things going on. Therefore, they called in the police to get all the necessary information and evidence.

[English]

Mr. McGrath: In his testimony before the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs during the passage of his estimates, the minister stated that he had alerted the RCMP in the fall of 1973. According to the sworn statement of the former head of the Montreal food inspection services, he had notified the Quebec Provincial Police a year before. After getting no action from them, he passed the same information on to the RCMP and, to quote him, he got "promises as large as this building, but nothing ever happened." Will the minister please explain?

[Translation]

Mr. Lalonde: Again, I have not seen the evidence of the inspector concerned. But once again, this only demonstrates that it was necessary to call on the police to get evidence that could really hold before the courts.

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[English]

HOUSING

EFFECT ON BUDGET OF INCREASED HOUSING STARTS IN MAY

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Did the Minister of Finance indicate to him privately that the upturn reflected in the May housing starts' statistics could mean less money in the budget for housing?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker. Discussions go on in general, but there has been no indication of that nature with regard to the upturn in May. We will look at that in the total context of the picture for the year.

LOANS TO AREAS WITH SEPTIC TANKS ONLY

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Is the minister in a position to reveal more details on the question I asked him two weeks ago with regard to relaxation in