

General Gowon on what Canadians feel about the abhorrent practice of attempting to destroy relief planes?

Mr. Hellyer: I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that this suggestion will be brought to the attention of the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

HOUSING

C.M.H.C. STATISTICAL REPORT—POSSIBLE UPWARD REVISION OF TARGET

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister in his capacity as the minister in charge of housing, with reference to the statistical report on Canadian housing issued yesterday by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. In view of their suggestion that even the construction of 250,000 units per year for the next five years would not eliminate the backlog, and in view of the fact that this figure is 25 per cent higher than the 200,000 units per year for the next five years recommended by the task force chaired by the minister, I want to ask the minister if in the light of this report he and his officials intend to revise upward the target for housing units for the next five years, and do they propose to ask parliament for the necessary funds to implement such a recommendation?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I prefer to deal in realistic figures. The figure of one million units in five years mentioned by the task force was described as a minimum target. I personally hope it will be exceeded by a substantial margin. However my hon. friend will realize from the report to which he refers that 200,000 units will improve the housing situation for Canadians very substantially, and anything beyond 200,000 units a year that we can do will improve it that much more substantially.

Beyond that you have to have access to information which has never been adequately codified. In other words, you have to know how many people live in doubled up accommodation because they prefer to do so, and we know there are some. We have to know the exact condition of several hundred thousand units that are described as poor in the housing stock statistics. I hope that we will be able to get more substantial, more precise information on these two matters in the course of the next few months, so that we

will know precisely just what is required. In the meantime I can assure my hon. friend that the figures that have been suggested, if they are achieved, will make a substantial inroad into the problem and improve housing conditions for Canadians very materially. We will make every effort possible—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. In view of the fact that Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation seems to have had in mind a higher and probably just as realistic a target as the task force may I ask the Minister whether there was any exchange of material between the task force and Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation; were they asked to make any recommendations or provide any research material? Would the Minister be prepared to table the exchanges of correspondence regarding desirable targets which may have passed between Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the task force?

Mr. Hellyer: I do not think there was any exchange of correspondence on desirable targets. We did have access to the material on their projects, and some others which we asked for. I think our main target would not have been too different from what would have been set by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, if it had set one. The figure of 250,000 at the moment is beyond the capability of either the country or industry to produce. As soon as we have the capability to produce that amount I hope it will be national policy to do so.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): May I ask the Minister whether Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation was asked to suggest a target, and if so what was it.

Mr. Hellyer: I cannot remember precisely, but I know there is no substantial disagreement in respect of the figures we have discussed.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister, in respect of the estimate of the number of housing units which will be required, whether the task force has taken into its calculation the large influx of people who will be driven off the farms of the country into the cities by the