

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Trudeau:** Madam Speaker, as far as small businessmen are concerned, we responded to the request of the Small Businessmen's Association. We extended to the end of this year the small business development loan, and that is a significant gesture.

**Mr. Crosbie:** The bond—my bond.

**Mr. Trudeau:** Madam Speaker, the bond.

The hon. member talks about the causes of inflation. Of course there are many. As he knows, one of the main causes of the rapidly increasing cost of living is the cost of energy. The government has been putting forward policies and seeking the support of members opposite for an energy policy which would keep inflation at about five to six points below what it would have been if we had followed the Tory energy policy.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Broadbent:** Madam Speaker, for almost a year now the issues of special assistance to senior citizens and lower energy prices than would have been provided by the Tories, have been singled out. That probably leaves out 95 per cent of Canadians from receiving any serious action which would benefit them in terms of inflation. Is that to be the sum total of the government's action on inflation? Or, is the Prime Minister going to stand back and allow the average income of working families to decrease by another \$1,200 this year, as the figures of the Minister of Finance indicate? In effect, is the Prime Minister saying that he does not care about that and that the financial policies of the government will remain unchanged?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Madam Speaker, I am sorry if I offend the hon. member. But when he mentions the figure of 95 per cent of Canadians being untouched, it seems to me he is showing a great ignorance of the need for energy by all Canadians in this country, from farmers to old age pensioners, to young people, who all across the country are benefiting from the government's policy to keep inflation at about five points below what it would have been under the budget of the party opposite.

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● (1430)

**HOUSING****IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS OUTLINED IN SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

**Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North):** My question is to the minister responsible for housing. In the Speech from the Throne the government promised to protect those Canadians most affected by unacceptably high interest rates, and they have been unacceptably high since the government took office. What action has the government taken on this promise?

**Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for the question because in fact it is a repeat of a question that he has asked and that I have responded to in the House on previous occasions.

I would simply remind the hon. gentleman of the history of the ministry since that time. The first action, again within a month of taking office, was the movement by the corporation and the ministry to respond under government programs to those people who had been promised continued assistance; I refer to the AHOP assistance program to keep costs below 30 per cent of income.

Secondly, I would remind the hon. gentleman of the increase of the non-profit social housing commitment of this government, to increase the annual commitment from 25,000 starts in a year to 30,000 starts.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I am happy to have the occasion to point out to the hon. member the provisions of the report on the handicapped yesterday, which complimented CMHC for its action in addressing the handicapped in this nation and for the leadership it has shown in that regard.

**Mr. Lewis:** We keep asking the question because we do not get an answer.

Turning to another part of the Speech from the Throne, the government promised to assist those unable to bear the burden of renegotiating their home mortgages in the present abnormal situation so that the spectre of foreclosure will be avoided. CMHC is now swamped with the spectre of foreclosed homes. Why did the minister not take any action on that promise?

**Mr. Cosgrove:** I would be repeating my last answer to the hon. gentleman, that when we said we would address assistance to those who needed help first, we did, to those people who were on the bottom end of the lower-income scale and that is why we addressed, for example, the rule to protect on an equitable basis those people who would have to pay more than 30 per cent of their income towards shelter cost. That is why we address the issue of social housing units, because those units, by and large, serve the target area, those people who find it difficult to come into the market, or find it difficult to compete or find housing in any other form.

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**FISHERIES****LONG-TERM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta):** My question, Madam Speaker, is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The throne speech makes a number of sanctimonious sounding promises with respect to initiatives affecting the fisheries sector which would be expected to increase substantially Canada's share of our own natural resource and to assure a maximum return to fishermen and fish processing companies. In the past ten months the exact opposite has happened. We see chaos in the industry, a lack of consultation, last minute changes of regulations, and this is all summarized in a condemning news letter put out by the Fisheries Council of Canada in December, which suggests that the minister is guilty of politicizing the decision-making affecting the management of the fisheries.