

*Oral Questions***HOUSING****RENTAL RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION—CUTS IN SPENDING**

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Housing. The Canadian Housing Renewal Association has said that the killing of the rental residential rehabilitation program will result in the decline of the living conditions of many low and moderate-income Canadians. This is the only major program that allows municipal and local Governments to upgrade substandard housing, to prevent conversions to high rise and high expense condominiums or to prevent demolition. What action will the Minister now take to help those thousands of Canadians, including children, who are caught in the housing crisis and who are being made homeless? Why not just keep this program?

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member should know that I am as unhappy as he is, and in fact, the Government is as unhappy as he is with having to reduce spending on this particular social housing program. At the same time, the Hon. Member is aware and all Canadians are aware that a few years ago, 18 cents out of every dollar the Government took in went to pay for interest on the national debt. Last year, it was 31 cents out of every dollar. This year it will be 35 cents. Before very long, there will not be any social housing programs if that keeps up. In order to make sure that we are going to preserve social housing programs in Canada, we have to take action on that deficit.

Mr. Karpoff: Mr. Speaker, at the rate this Government is going, there sure will not be any social programs left in this country.

SOCIAL HOUSING—IMPACT OF BUDGET

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): My supplementary question is directed to the Minister. This Budget has cut needed social housing programs, has increased taxes on homes and has done everything to drive up interest rates rather than bring them down to make housing affordable. Can the Minister point to one single thing in this Budget that will actually provide Canadians with affordable housing?

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member would examine the Estimates and the Budget very carefully, he would find that in fact, the Budget for social housing last year was \$1.6 billion. This year it is \$1.7 billion. There has actually been a \$100 million increase in the social housing budget.

*[Translation]***FORESTRY****BUDGETARY CUT-BACKS—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. Guy H. Arsenault (Restigouche): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. On a number of occasions in the past, the Prime Minister promised people in the forestry sector that he would give the industry the attention it deserved, considering its importance to Canada's economy. The Prime Minister also promised to establish a department that would be responsible for forestry. The Budget tells another story. It shows cutbacks of \$28 million and 44 person years.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House whether the Prime Minister's commitments to the forestry sector were only empty promises? And how can he explain the cutbacks, in view of those commitments?

[English]

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State (Forestry)): Mr. Speaker, perhaps it would be helpful to put the matter in the proper context. The Hon. Member is comparing what he has read in the Estimates with standards that were established by this Government and by this Prime Minister. There has been the restoration of the Canadian forest service to its rightful place as a full Department and accomplishments have been made in developing a forest sector strategy. There is a committee of Ministers that meets on a regular basis to plan future long-term integrated forest management policies that will not only preserve the commercial values of our forests but also the non-timber assets and will manage them properly. If the Hon. Member would read the information that I have sent him, he would know that there will not be a cut in the forestry budget but a significant increase once the establishment of the new Ministry and the separation from its previous Department is complete.

FOREST RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

Mr. Guy H. Arsenault (Restigouche): My supplementary question is directed to the Minister of State for Forestry. In the past, the Minister has stated how successfully the forest resource development agreements have functioned. Last year's Estimates for the agreements were \$139 million. This year's Estimates reduce that amount by 25 per cent and next year's projections reduce that figure by 66 per cent. Can the Minister explain to the 5,000 people in New Brunswick who stand to lose their jobs if the agreements are not renegotiated why the agreements have been so severely cut? Moreover, does the Government have the intention of eliminating these agreements all together, and can he