

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

policies at all relating to the housing program. If so, when can this house expect the announcement of such new policies, unless the minister is satisfied with everything about his policies as they are?

**Mr. Nicholson:** With all due respect, in spite of the hon. member's sarcasm, I wish to make it clear that neither the minister nor the government is satisfied with the number of housing starts, and the matter of what further action should be taken is constantly under review.

[Translation]

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question.

The hon. minister has just said that the increase in the interest rate was an incentive for the building of new dwellings in Canada. Does the hon. minister agree that the building problem in Canada would be solved, as he says, by increasing the interest rate from 7½ per cent to 20 per cent?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. That is an argument rather than a question.

[English]

**Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford):** I have a supplementary question for the Acting Prime Minister. In view of the general interest in increasing housing starts throughout Canada, would the hon. gentleman recommend to his colleagues on the treasury benches the removal at once of the 11 per cent sales tax on building materials?

**Mr. J. R. Keays (Gaspé):** A further supplementary to the Minister of Labour, based on the fact that applications are now being received from people who wish to borrow money directly from C.M.H.C., which money will not be available until April 1. In view of the decline in housing starts, would the minister inquire whether these loans could not be made available as of now rather than as of April 1?

**Mr. Nicholson:** We have already had some discussion in the house today about the importance of coming to parliament in connection with certain matters. We are beginning a new fiscal year on April 1, and this is why we have advanced the date for the making of application without waiting until the next fiscal year. The funds will come out of next year's estimates.

**Mr. G. L. Chatterton (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Can the minister assure the house that any  
[Mr. Lewis.]

person who would otherwise qualify but who cannot get a loan through an approved lender will be able to get a direct loan from C.M.H.C?

**Mr. Nicholson:** No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot give any such assurance. I can give the assurance, however, that applications received both from builders and from individuals who wish to build their own homes will receive prompt consideration provided the applicants are reasonably good risks and satisfy the other conditions which come into the loan picture.

**VETERANS AFFAIRS****REQUEST THAT PENSION INCREASE BE EXTENDED TO DEPENDANTS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. A. B. Patterson (Fraser Valley):** I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. In view of the delay in the tabling of the Woods committee report and the continuing hardship experienced by recipients of veterans pensions, will the minister reconsider his previous decision and extend the recent 15 per cent increase to dependants as well?

**Hon. Roger Teillet (Minister of Veterans Affairs):** First, the delay in adjusting the pensions of veterans is not because of the Woods report; it is awaiting the report of another nature from another group in my department which is dealing specifically with pension rates. I can assure the hon. member and the house that if the report does not come to hand in the fairly near future we shall perhaps have to consider making some adjustment in pension rates in the interim period. I am hoping the report will be to hand in time for this to be avoided, and for an adjustment to be made consistent with some logical basis.

**Mr. Patterson:** Does this contemplated revision include dependants as well as the recipients?

**Mr. Teillet:** All aspects of pension rates are being considered in this study.

**AGRICULTURE****INQUIRY AS TO PROVISION OF FARM LABOUR FOR SEEDING SEASON**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. E. Nasserden (Rosthern):** I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Has the department under consideration any special program designed to satisfy the demand for farm labour during the seeding season which is coming up?