

Acting Prime Minister, is the opinion of the government the same as that of the Prime Minister when he expressed his opinion—and I quote his words—that inflation is licked?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for York South.

Mr. Hees: Could we have an answer to that, Mr. Speaker?

* * *

HOUSING

REQUEST FOR TABLING OF LOW INCOME HOUSING AND OTHER REPORTS TO CENTRAL MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask some questions of the Minister of State for Urban Affairs who was not scheduled to be here but, who I congratulate for being here this morning. In view of the leak of a report by three professors of the University of Montreal regarding the operations of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, I should like to know whether he would agree to table that report at the earliest possible moment.

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, whatever leaks there may be appear to be from the authors and not from CMHC. The comments I have seen in the press are neither new nor very original. Because there are so many reports which have been made within the corporation during the last little while, I have asked for a complete review for myself concerning which ones should be made public and which ones should not be.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister a supplementary question. The head of CMHC has already commented—and I quote from the newspaper report—that this report is bloody nonsense. In view of the fact also that there are five additional reports according to the newspaper, indeed six reports altogether which have been prepared as a result of the task force, may I ask the minister how soon he will inform the House which of these reports will be made public so that the people of Canada and members of parliament may have a better understanding of the role of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation under the National Housing Act on an issue as important as housing in Canada?

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, when my review of the question is finished. I had intended to table the annual report of the corporation today which indicates, contrary to some statements that have been made, that 83.2 per cent of the present budget is allocated for low-income programs. I must admit I have devoted most of my attention, as indicated in the Speech from the Throne and in my speech of a week ago last Monday, to getting before the House as soon as possible new housing legislation to correct some of the mechanisms we now have to improve housing in Canada.

Mr. Lewis: I have a final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister inform the House how long his depart-

ment and Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation have had these reports, because I am informed it has been quite a time? May I ask the minister what exactly the department is trying to hide in refusing to make these reports public?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The minister might like to reply to the first part of the question, but the hon. member will appreciate that the second part of his question is hardly acceptable procedurally.

Mr. Lewis: It is a statement of fact, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Basford: The reports have been received over a period of time whenever they were finished and submitted and the department has been devoting its attention to reviewing the National Housing Act and putting proposals before me and my predecessor in the government.

AVAILABILITY OF REPORT ON LOW INCOME HOUSING PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF ESTIMATES BY COMMITTEE

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the minister. In view of the indictment in the report to the effect that the much touted special innovative program to help low-income groups a couple of years back was a failure, will the minister assure the House that the report in respect of which my friend and I are asking questions will be made available to interested members by the time when the housing estimates go to the committee.

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think I have answered that question.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Greenwood for a last supplementary and then I think in fairness the Chair should recognize the hon. member for Compton.

INQUIRY AS TO INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the same minister. In light of the apparent fact that the task force report advocates a rehabilitation program immediately to replace present stop-gap measures, will the minister assure the House that the promised legislation on this subject will be brought to the House very soon?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the government's position was indicated in the Speech from the Throne and in my speech to the House of a week ago Monday in which it was made clear that legislation dealing with a number of housing subjects would be proceeded with just as fast as we can.