

**An hon. Member:** We are all with you. Come on over.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** I do not need to go over there I can stand here and be heard as well. I wish to ask the minister responsible for housing whether the CMHC intends to take any action to reduce its section 40 interest rate, since the banks have reduced their NHA rates recently?

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister without Portfolio):** I certainly hasten to respond to one of the eloquent spokesmen for western Canada. The answer is yes, I expect there will be an announcement by the CMHC today to the effect that the section 40 interest rate on loans will be reduced to 8½ per cent.

**Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Will that reduction apply in the case of existing mortgages?

**Mr. Andras:** The standard practice will prevail with regard to mortgages in train. What is done will depend very much on the state of advance or the state of commitment on them.

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#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

##### ACCESS TO CONSTITUENTS AT MARCONI OPERATION BY NORTHWEST TERRITORIES COUNCILLOR

**Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal):** I have a question for the Minister of National Defence. Yesterday the minister cut me off at the pass, but I have the nerve to try again. Will the hon. gentleman investigate the reason a Northwest Territories elected councillor was denied access to those of his constituents who live and work on a Marconi contract site at Resolute Bay? Further, will he ensure that councillors will have the opportunity of gaining access to their constituents so that the concept of Arctic sovereignty is not restricted?

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of National Defence):** As I recall it, the hon. member asked about access to a ballistic missile early warning site and I pointed out there are no such sites in Canada. If he would like to provide me with details of any complaint he may have, I would be glad to investigate.

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[Translation]

#### URBAN AFFAIRS

##### POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF MINISTRY

**Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the minister in charge of housing.

In view of the statement he made in the House today to the effect that consultation mechanisms will be established with junior governments, could he assure us that the government will not consider creating a ministry of urban affairs shortly or in the near future?

23966—41

#### Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister without Portfolio):** The intention of the government is clearly stated in the Speech from the Throne. It will be establishing a ministry of state for urban affairs. The whole problem at the moment is that opposition members are not permitting the passage of the organization bill.

##### FORUM FOR DISCUSSION OF LITHWICK REPORT

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** I should like to address a supplementary question to the minister. Earlier he expressed the hope that the Lithwick report would lead to public discussion. I would respectfully ask what machinery he intends to use to initiate such public discussion. Does he envisage such discussion will take place within the confines of a standing committee on urban affairs or will it take place in a joint committee? I would appreciate the minister telling us just what he has in mind in this regard.

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister without Portfolio):** I shall be in a much better position to answer that kind of question and take that kind of action when the opposition allows me to become legitimate in this role.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I wonder whether we might not go on to another subject. However, if the hon. member for Hamilton West feels he should ask a supplementary I will recognize him.

**Mr. Alexander:** I am wondering why the minister cannot be a little kinder to us in the opposition and do his best to answer a simple question. I do not think the question I asked had anything to do with the creation of a ministry of state. The minister already has ideas about what he wants to do. What machinery does he contemplate using to initiate the public discussion which he desires of this important report? Would he kindly advise the House whether he has in mind a standing committee? Just what does he have in mind? It is a simple question.

**Mr. Andras:** I think the first move in the creation of such machinery would be, as I suggested, the establishment of a ministry of state for urban affairs.

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#### ENERGY

##### DIFFICULTY OF LAYING PIPELINES ON PERMAFROST—INVESTIGATION OF RUSSIAN PRACTICE

**Mr. Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley):** My question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Having regard to the difficulty involved in laying pipelines on permafrost, has the minister, in his research, contacted his opposite number in the Soviet Union with a view to finding out what is done in that country? Further, would he recommend or approve a visit by the northern affairs committee so that its members could see for themselves what methods are used?