

would give the house the assurance that either he or the Prime Minister will consult with the chairman of the legislative group which has been meeting with its United States counterparts in 1965 and 1966. It was apparent from the last discussions which were held in Washington that there was no consultation between the legislative branch and the executive branch. Therefore I would ask the Acting Prime Minister whether he would take it upon himself to consult with the chairman of the Canadian side at least to the end that the subject matters discussed by the legislative branch will be brought forward for discussion by the executive branch.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

FURTHER INFORMATION ON DISTRIBUTION OF COLOUR TELEVISION SETS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, last Friday the right hon. Leader of the Opposition made some remarks and inquiries in respect to the provision by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation of colour television sets. I have been able to get some information which I should now like to give both him and the house.

The C.B.C. has advised me that it had not provided the specific names of staff members occupying positions to which colour sets have been assigned because of an understanding over the years that it is not the intent of parliament to require crown corporations to make public information which is basically related to their internal administration and management.

While the corporation has always replied freely to parliamentary questions on matters of C.B.C. policy, it has from time to time sought the indulgence of parliament in not providing information of a detailed operational nature. In the view of the corporation the question with respect to the colour television sets came within this category. If the corporation is in error in this interpretation of intent and is so advised by parliament, then the names will be provided. The C.B.C. cannot and will not refuse any information requested by parliament, and this applies to the present instance. While the corporation is in the hands of parliament, it respectfully suggests that a continuation of past policy and practice in principle is essential to the most efficient operational needs of the corporation in all their aspects.

Inquiries of the Ministry

The corporation does not require regular reports from occupants of those positions assigned colour T.V. sets, but requires them to be conversant with either or both the programming and technical aspects of its colour programming. Because colour television is new the discussion and assessment of the colour performance is carried out by C.B.C. staff on a continuing and near daily basis rather than at periodic intervals. It is also part of most program and technical meetings.

HOUSING

SUGGESTED REDUCTION IN INTEREST RATES ON MORTGAGE LOANS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. David Lewis (York South): I have a question for the Minister of Labour in his capacity as the minister responsible for housing. In view of the steady worsening of the housing crisis in Canada, and reports that starts in the first two months of this year were reduced by 38½ per cent as compared with the first two months of last year, can the minister inform the house whether he is considering reducing the interest rate on N.H.A. loans and enabling such loans to be made directly to prospective home owners as well as to construction companies?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): While it is true that housing starts were down during the months of January and February, I think it is safe to say that our experience of the last four weeks illustrates the wisdom of changing the rate to 7¼ per cent, since I understand that we have had more applications from approved lenders in the last four weeks or so than in the entire six months before the increase in the interest rate took place; that is, while the old rate was in effect. When the new rate became effective there was a certain element of flexibility attached to it. It is tied to the yield on bonds issued by the federal government. We see no necessity for further change at this time.

I personally am very encouraged about the reports which have been received on the number of loan applications accepted by approved lenders in the last three or four weeks. It has been exceptionally high, certainly not in line with the figures for January and February, because those were tied in with loan applications made last fall when the old rate was in force.

Mr. Lewis: May I ask the minister, who is rather easily encouraged, I think, whether he or the government is considering any new