

Oral Questions

manpower in this area, and we will continue to do so. I do not have the exact figures.

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HOUSING**ELIGIBILITY OF PURCHASERS OF CONDOMINIUMS FOR FIVE HUNDRED DOLLAR GRANT—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Would he advise the House whether any definite conclusion has been reached with regard to the effective date with regard to the applicability of the \$500 grant to first time purchasers of condominiums and whether, in addition to that, there has been any change of view concerning the fact that the program envisaged the purchase of new homes rather than used homes.

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): In so far as condominiums are concerned, they do qualify and on the same dates as announced for the program. I assume the hon. member means the date of occupancy or ownership of the condominium. If the purchaser has an agreement to purchase, the \$500 home owners grant will be forthcoming from the time he moves in with the option to purchase which we would honour as evidence of purchase.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): The reason the difficulty arises is that under certain provincial legislation the transfer of title in an effective purchase agreement cannot be completed until 75 per cent of the units have been purchased or agreements entered into. In many instances it is eight or nine months after the first tentative agreement is signed under which individuals are merely tenants that they can be classified as purchasers, and this creates a great deal of difficulty and uncertainty. I, and I believe everybody, would appreciate it if the minister could make a clear and unequivocal declaration as to what the program will cover.

Mr. Danson: That is the intention. I will try to clarify it further, if I can. As I understand it, in some cases the number of residents required must reach 80 per cent and we understand that in some cases the finalization of those agreements can take eight months to a year and sometimes more. For those reasons, as long as there is an agreement to purchase and it is binding, we will consider that, for these purposes, to have been the completion of the purchase, assuming that the applicant moves in in that time frame and with that agreement from November 1, 1974 to November 1, 1975.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): It's tough on those people who moved in this summer.

[Mr. Allmand.]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**TRIAL OF DR. STERN IN SOVIET UNION—REQUEST FOR REPRESENTATIONS BY CANADA**

Mr. John Roberts (St. Paul's): My question is addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs or in his absence to a minister delegated to reply on his behalf. In view of the trial of Dr. Stern which began this week in the Soviet Union, which seems to stem simply from his desire to emigrate to Israel, and the widespread concern expressed about this trial in Canada, including a petition which I presented to the Secretary of State for External Affairs on Dr. Shtern's behalf, could the minister inform the House whether the Canadian government has made or is prepared to make representations to the Soviet Union indicating Canada's concern about this trial?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I do not think it would be appropriate for the government of Canada to make representations of this kind, but I would suggest to the hon. member that he could make this petition and its contents known to the Soviet ambassador here. I would be prepared to see that these representations that he has presented to the House are conveyed by our ambassador on his behalf to the Soviet government.

POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS OF GRAIN TO NEEDY COUNTRIES—ALTERNATE SOURCES OF FINANCING OF FOOD RELIEF

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture. A meeting was held in Rome on November 29 of the major grain exporting and importing countries to follow up the earlier world food conference. Were there additional commitments made by Canada or other countries at this meeting on November 29 to reallocate grains to the most seriously affected countries threatened with early or immediate starvation?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the meetings examined the availability of supply of grain, but so far as Canada is concerned no further commitments were made at that time. Of course we will be endeavouring to find out what supplies we have available so that we know what can be offered either for aid for other countries or for the commercial market.

Mr. Brewin: The producers and importers at this Rome meeting put the emergency needs of African and Asian nations from now until the end of June at 7.5 million tons of grain. How much of this has been committed and did Canada or other nations insist upon alternate sources of financing for immediate food relief for the areas most seriously affected to the financing available from traditional food donors?

Mr. Lang: Our basic position did not change at that meeting from the position we took at the conference in Rome earlier which was that having made certain additional commitments ourselves, and very significant ones for future years as well, we now expect that other nations should come forward with similar increases in their aid commitment. There have been some indications of willing-