

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, although there is a ceiling price which includes the 8 per cent, as the hon. gentleman is well aware, there is also provision that adjustments can be made from time to time in order to reflect the real inflation rate on a yearly basis.

Mr. McKinnon: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Supply and Services could inform the House, apart from their contract, and if the worst comes to the worst in the United States, and the United States navy as well as the United States marine corps decides not to buy the F-18A, if they have a contingency plan of what Canada's action will be in that event.

Mr. Blais: Madam Speaker, I can advise the hon. member that we have every expectation that the number of aircraft that are contemplated as being produced by the manufacturer will indeed be produced. We have every assurance that even the numbers which have been contemplated will be surpassed and that Canada's position will be enhanced as a result.

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HEALTH CARE

COST-SHARING WITH PROVINCES

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of continuing crises in Canada's health care system, such as those brought on by the refusal of provincial governments to meet their share of needed health care funds, with the possibility of a nurses' strike in Alberta being the latest result of provincial stinginess, can the minister tell the House what she intends to do about this problem before Justice Hall's report comes down this summer?

● (1200)

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): I studied carefully, Madam Speaker, the possible lines of action before the recommendations are made to us by Justice Hall on putting medicare back to where it should be in every part of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Miss Bégin: With the state of the matter when we came back to the government, we concluded that it was best not to interfere with the ongoing public hearings, to let the public see more facts and to let Justice Hall and the people he has gathered around him in his team, Mr. Malcolm Taylor and others, do their work and make recommendations to the government which could be, I hope, ideas other than just the two heavy legal tools left to us in today's legislation on medicare.

Mr. Blaikie: I have a supplementary question, Madam Speaker. That was an answer that was unacceptable to the Minister of National Health and Welfare when it was given to

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her in the last Parliament by the Conservative government, and it is unacceptable to me now.

In view of Liberal party commitments during the election campaign to discourage health care premiums, deterrent fees and extra billing, would the minister indicate what she intends to do now to reduce the cost of health care for individual Canadians which, according to the consumer price index, rose 1.7 per cent in the last month?

Miss Bégin: Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member is forgetting a few facts of life. The commission existed: we did not create it; the Conservative government created it. Do you prefer to have the work of the commission cancelled? My common sense tells me, no: the commission should be supported in its work, and that is the decision we made.

Recommendations should be made to us by June 30. In the meantime, we have always said that the public must get involved and tell us if they want free health care. What did we do? We tried to put the facts to the public. But what happened? In New Brunswick, for instance—am I not right—the Conservative government just withdrew their user fees they had put last year. Is that not a victory for medicare?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

FUNDING FOR NON-PROFIT AND CO-OP HOUSING

Hon. Paul Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, in response to a question put by the hon. member for Vancouver East yesterday, I would like to report that the difference, or shortfall, between allocation and express demand for non-profit starts for 1980 is 6,089, and for co-ops it is 2,978. I cannot confirm allocation increase for this year, but I am considering it as a device to try to take some of the heat out of the tight rental market.

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PRIVILEGE

MISS MACDONALD—MOSCOW OLYMPICS—REQUEST LETTER BE TABLED—RULING BY MADAM SPEAKER

Madam Speaker: Order. Yesterday the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) rose on a question of privilege to ask that the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) table a copy of a letter sent by him to President Carter to which he referred during the question period on Tuesday, April 15, 1980. While the Prime Minister is at liberty to table this letter if he chooses to do so, I must point out to the House that there is no obligation upon him to table the letter, which he did not actually quote but to which he merely referred.