

Oral Questions

HOUSING

CONTINGENCY PLANS TO INCREASE HOUSING STARTS—DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the Minister of State for Urban Affairs who is responsible for housing may I put this question to the Acting Prime Minister. Considering that just before Christmas the director of CMHC, Mr. Teron, said that there were certain contingency plans that the government would implement should housing starts fall below the anticipated rate of 200,000 a year, and in view of the fact that the current rate, according to figures released yesterday, stands at only 138,000 units, would the Acting Prime Minister inform the House whether the government intends to put forward these contingency plans that Mr. Teron referred to?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should like to take notice of this question and give an adequate answer.

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[Translation]

MANPOWER

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION OF NAMES OF MEMBERS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

Since the minister has decided that advisory committees in the various sectors of work have been instructed to give priority to projects submitted by youths within the Opportunity for Youth Program, and since it is impossible to get from the officials of the minister's office the names of those committee members, can I ask him whether he is prepared to authorize his employees to provide the list of the members of a committee for a given region, upon request from an MP?

[English]

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Very definitely, Mr. Speaker; I see no reason at all. In fact, I think each member of the House should have a list of the members of management area advisory committees, which are appointed in the main by the members themselves. If there is any question about this I will issue instructions forthwith to make the information available.

[Translation]

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

In view of the favourable attitude and the positive answer of the minister, can I ask him to give immediate instruction to the employees of his office so that they effectively respond along the lines of the answer he has just given?

[English]

Mr. Andras: I think that is exactly what I have just said, Mr. Speaker.

POSSIBILITY OF MAINTAINING GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVE FOR STARTS—SUGGESTED DEDUCTIBILITY OF MORTGAGE PAYMENTS AND PROPERTY TAXES FROM INCOME TAX

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I should like to refer again to the drastic decline in housing starts in the first quarter of 1975, down 54 per cent for the month of March alone. Will the Acting Prime Minister say if the government is still confident it can reach its minimum target of 210,000 starts, and will that objective be maintained in the preparation of the new budget?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the House will have noticed that yesterday when the Minister of Finance announced he was bringing in a budget this was one of the problems to which he referred, and which seemed to make it necessary to take additional measures.

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, now that the Minister of Finance has recognized the severity of the economic situation with his promise to bring in a budget, is the government actively considering a budgetary measure that would make a proportion of mortgage payments and property taxes deductible for income tax purposes?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, as a former Minister of Finance I never did forecast what would be in a budget. I always looked upon such matters as confidential, but I will pass the suggestion along to the Minister of Finance.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

REQUEST THAT MINISTER ATTEND LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE AND STRENGTHEN NEGOTIATING TEAM

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, in view of the possibility that the 200-mile economic zone concept may not be translated into agreed treaty language at the Law of the Sea Conference, while conversely the conference cannot succeed on any basis other than a convention founded on a concept of the economic zone being managed by the coastal state, I should like to ask whether it is the intention of the Secretary of State for External Affairs to go to the conference along with the Minister of State for Fisheries and the Minister of the Environment, for the balance of the conference in order to strengthen the hardworking Canadian team presently negotiating there on our behalf?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the hon. member back from the Law of the Sea Conference. I propose to address that conference later on. In the meantime my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, will be present, as will the Minister of State for Fisheries at a later point, so the delegation will be supported ministerially in the way I have described.