

Inquiries of the Ministry

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): I hope to be able to answer the question shortly. I am sorry to have kept the hon. gentleman waiting for two and a half years.

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. D. McLelland (Rosetown-Biggart): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Would he advise this house and the nation if the government will take the necessary steps to see that the shore line of Diefenbaker lake, created by the construction of the Gardiner dam, will be cleaned up and not left in its present polluted and hazardous condition?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Agriculture): We are always very careful to keep anything with the Diefenbaker name as clean as possible.

HOUSING**BRITISH COLUMBIA—REPORTED CEILING ON UNIT COST OF LOW RENTAL PROJECTS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Has the minister been informed of the decision of the British Columbia government to set a ceiling of \$12,000 per unit in regard to participation in low rental housing programs in Vancouver and the surrounding area? If so, has the minister any comment to make? I should like to ask the minister whether this action of the British Columbia government will make federal funds unavailable for low rental housing.

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, my attention was first drawn to this recent action on the part of the government of British Columbia through a newspaper article. I immediately got in touch with officials of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and I also called the provincial minister responsible in the housing field.

There had been a suggestion that an average amount of \$12,000 per housing unit be fixed. I had not been able to get details as to whether that figure includes land, but I was informed that the figure was not \$12,000 for any particular unit, but an average of approximately \$12,000. I have asked for further details.

I also wish to say that so far as these projects in British Columbia are concerned

[Mr. Fairweather.]

—they number some 1,000 units altogether—not just as the minister responsible for the administration of the National Housing Act but as a member of parliament for a British Columbia riding and therefore having a special interest in the matter, during the past several months I have put some suggestions to the provincial government through the municipal authorities concerned to induce them to take action. I am glad to see that some initiative is now being shown. I might also say that federal funds are available for these projects.

Mr. H. E. Gray (Essex West): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister of Labour is in a position to announce to the house the date of the special federal-provincial conference on housing, to which he referred when he spoke on this matter several weeks ago, in view of the continuing need for further action on housing.

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, at that time I stated that an invitation would go out before the end of October. The invitation has gone out in the name of the Prime Minister to the ten provincial premiers for a conference, suggesting the date of December 11.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour.

Can the minister tell us whether the provincial premiers, or their representatives, who have been invited to that conference, have already sent him their answer?

[English]

Mr. Nicholson: I would think not, Mr. Speaker.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**BRITISH COLUMBIA—USE OF HYPNOTISM ON ACCUSED IN COURT**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Justice whether his attention has been called to the rather extraordinary procedure in British Columbia where an accused person was placed under a hypnotic trance in court, and whether he has instructed his officials to examine the facts in the case and report back in order that we may ascertain whether changes should be made to the Canada Evidence Act so that such iniquitous practices may not develop.