

Oral Questions

colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce has instructed the Export Development Corporation, in the context of its legislative mandate, to review the Arab boycott clause as it applies to both insurance and direct lending operations.

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HOUSING**REQUEST FOR INCREASE IN AMOUNT OF LOAN UNDER AHOP AND REDUCTION IN MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE**

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. In view of the fact that the price of homes has moved beyond the reach of most families, would the Minister of State for Urban Affairs increase by at least 50 per cent the direct lending allowance of CMHC for AHOP non-profit and public housing to at least provide housing for people of low or moderate income at a reasonable price?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I will consider any suggestion the hon. member makes.

Mr. Gilbert: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the Minister of State for Urban Affairs and his officials have been in touch with the financial institutions concerning the recent increase in mortgage rates by the banks, has the minister persuaded the banks to roll back the interest increase by accepting their social responsibility to solve the housing crisis?

Mr. Danson: Mr. Speaker, we make regular contacts to keep tuned in to the mortgage situation. I am not at all satisfied yet that mortgage rates have stabilized and I am continuing to watch them carefully. I am not so much concerned whether the banks are aware of their responsibility in this regard; I am more concerned at the moment that mortgage money comes onto the market at the lowest possible level in view of the cost of money, and that it is coming in sufficient quantity to provide housing that Canadians can afford.

SUGGESTION CMHC PREPARING NEW MEASURES TO DEAL WITH EMERGENCY SITUATION—REQUEST FOR CONSULTATION WITH PROVINCES

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. In view of reports over the week end that CMHC is proposing new measures prior to the budget to deal with the emergency situation in housing, would the minister say whether these reports are indeed correct and whether they form part of the consensus program that the Minister of Finance has been seeking?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, without evading the question, which I appreciate is a frank one, I would rather not comment on newspaper reports that are speculating on what I might do, which might unnecessarily cause more uncertainty and confusion.

[Mr. Sharp.]

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister assure the House that prior to the announcement of any such proposal these measures would include consultations with his provincial counterparts to allocate more funds to the provinces for socially assisted housing?

Mr. Danson: Mr. Speaker, I have assured my provincial counterparts that there will be consultations—

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): You had not as of this morning.

Mr. Danson: I have been in touch with them as recently as the last two weeks to give that indication, and that will be the case.

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FARM CREDIT CORPORATION**ALLEGED DIFFICULTY OF FARMERS IN PROCESSING APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

Mr. Ken Hurlburt (Lethbridge): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the ministers directly responsible I therefore direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister. In light of the fact that many farmers are experiencing difficulty in having their applications processed through the Farm Credit Corporation, and in view of the fact that many farmers' plans for spring work have come to a complete stop until these applications are processed, would the Acting Prime Minister inform the House whether or not a directive has been sent to all farm credit offices to alleviate this serious situation?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I cannot answer the question directly, but I know my colleague the Minister of Agriculture will give very sympathetic consideration to that representation.

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[Translation]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**POSSIBILITY OF OIL SPILL ON WEST COAST—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): If I have enough energy left in my voice, I should like to ask a question to the Minister of Environment.

Considering her reply Friday to a question asked by my colleague for Vancouver South concerning the routing of tankers from Alaska, and especially her satisfaction with regard to the alternative destination of such tankers, could the minister explain how construction of a pipeline from the town of Port Angeles, located at the south east extremity of the Juan de Fuca Strait, at Cherry Point, could avoid the possibly disastrous effects of an enormous spill of hydrocarbons from a 150,000-ton tanker into the Juan de Fuca Strait prior to the arrival of the tanker at Port Angeles?

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, these super-tankers are capable of navigating