

Oral Questions

[English]

GRAIN

WHEAT—SUGGESTED COMMITTEE STUDY OF METHODS TO PREVENT LOSSES TO PRODUCERS AS RESULT OF LABOUR-MANAGEMENT DISPUTES—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 43 I rise on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity. In the light of reliable statements released by the Palliser Wheat Growers' Association that the wheat producers of Canada have incurred losses of \$261 million during the 1974-75 crop year as a result of labour disruptions and breakdowns in the grain handling and transportation system, which is the equivalent of 50 cents per bushel or \$1,700 per producer, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Stewart):

That the subject matter be referred to a special parliamentary committee to immediately consider ways and means of resolving the current labour-management relationship—to consider ways and means by which the producers may recover; and be further saved from any future losses as a result of the failure of management and/or labour to act responsibly in the over-all national interest.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The motion is proposed pursuant to Standing Order 43 and cannot be debated without the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

HOUSING

REQUEST FOR MINISTER'S ESTIMATE OF NUMBER OF STARTS THIS YEAR

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Given the lack of performance by the government in its housing programs, as highlighted by the minister's admission that the anticipated results from his extended AHOP program have not been encouraging, less than 400 applications out of a predicted 30,000, and given the fact that the minister has admitted that it will be difficult to attain his over-all minimum of 210,000 housing starts, can the minister give the House a revised estimate of starts he now feels is realistically possible to attain in this year?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, first, I do not accept the preamble about there being a lack of performance of the government. Government programs have been operating exceedingly well. We have had to operate in an open economy and in an international economic situation. In that situation, I think the government is performing well. At this

[Mr. Speaker.]

time I am not prepared to give a prediction. I am still keeping my sights high, but I realize the difficulty in meeting those targets.

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FINANCE

REFERENCE TO MINISTER'S STATEMENT CONCERNING PRIORITY FOR HOUSING AND POSSIBILITY OF LOWER MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): My supplementary is to the Minister of Finance, and it is based on the reticence of the reply of the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if he is now prepared to reaffirm his statement of March 10 that one of the priorities of the government is to give sufficient leverage to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs to enable him to achieve a rate of housing starts at a minimum of 210,000, also bearing in mind that he had predicted in his November 18 budget that there would be lower mortgage interest rates, whereas they have gone up.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will be saying something about this subject soon.

REASON FOR DELAY IN ESTABLISHMENT OF FEDERAL MORTGAGE EXCHANGE CORPORATION

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, since the ministers seem to have so little comment to make on the desperate housing situation, I would like to put one final supplementary to the Minister of Finance. Given the importance attached to the Federal Mortgage Exchange Corporation as a source of secondary mortgage funding by two ministers of housing and given the minister's comment on May 13 that after two years the corporation still has not been established because he has been unable to find a president and board of directors with sufficient experience in this field out of some 23 million Canadians, will the minister say how his search for this elusive group is proceeding or if he is according it any priority at all?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): I will deal with that subject at the same time, Mr. Speaker.

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HOUSING

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF WARRANTY PROGRAM

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. In view of the fact the hon. Minister's predecessor in 1974 was promising a housing warranty program so that housing quality would be assured in Canada, and since almost a year later, on February 28, 1975, the minister responsible was still promising that concrete measures would be taken to implement a warranty program, is the minister now ready to inform the House if this program has either fallen