

sense, the treaty would not cover this. This is handled by domestic law. There is recognition, however, that the standards which might be imposed, whether by way of local taxation or other requirements, should on the whole, be mutual on either side. There should not be any exceptional charge disguised in any way for passage across the territory.

● (1430)

Mr. Gillies: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the minister if it is the intent of officials in both countries to include the proposed hook-ups to the Mackenzie pipeline in these agreements?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, the treaty would be one, if there is to be one, of general application and would not apply to any specific pipeline system. In Canadian terms, it would obviously secure our position with regard to the Interprovincial line and Lakeland pipelines, and also with regard to the Portland pipeline. In American terms, if there is to be a Mackenzie Valley pipeline which, of course, has not yet been determined, it would be governed, but there would be no specific reference in a treaty of general application.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

ALLEGED DISQUALIFICATION OF RURAL RESIDENTS FROM BENEFITS—REQUEST FOR REVIEW

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George—Peace River): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Since increasing numbers of Canadians every day have to use the services of the Unemployment Insurance Commission, since many areas in Canada are considered as rural, areas in which employment opportunities are limited, and since the commission seems to have adopted a policy for disqualifying people living in such areas from benefits made available by the Unemployment Insurance Commission, is the minister aware of this problem; are his officials reviewing the policy; and is a degree of discretion applied in dealing with the people of the areas I mentioned.

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the premise to the hon. member's question, wherein he implies that there is a policy to discriminate against people in rural areas, is wrong.

An hon. Member: He's right on.

Mr. Andras: If the hon. member or any other hon. member has a specific case to bring to my attention, I will be glad to explore it and consider all the implications for the administration in that area. Otherwise, I do not see that the review the hon. member is calling for is required.

Mr. Oberle: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I have brought specific problems to the minister's attention. The question is, is his department reviewing this very serious situation and will changes be made to this act, because it discriminates against a large segment of our population.

Oral Questions

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, there are intended changes to the act. After the hon. member has had the opportunity to review them, perhaps he can make his case. In the meantime, I suggest that he has brought forward a genuine and I am sure honest matter of disagreement.

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HOUSING

ALLEGED SHORTAGE OF SENIOR CITIZENS UNITS AS RESULT OF POLICY SHIFT—REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE INVESTIGATION

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Given the low priority accorded to housing by this government, as indicated by the capital spending budget of CMHC, and given this government's cut-back in funding to provincial governments for socially assisted housing programs, is the minister aware that this shift in federal housing policy is directly accountable for a shortfall of some 4,000 senior citizen units in Ontario alone and that this situation is duplicated in every province of Canada?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member obviously cannot be serious about the low priority the federal government gives housing, as there has been an increase in the non-capital budget of 92 per cent. The budget for housing has been increased, so that housing obviously has a very high priority. In addition, with the help of hon. members, Bill C-46 could pass after short debate. This would release perhaps \$1 billion for housing. I would welcome the same degree of flexibility on the part of the province of Ontario as I have tried to show that government. I would certainly welcome some degree of flexibility on the part of the province of Ontario. If they are really spending as much as they say, perhaps we can combine our priorities so that we can build as many houses as are needed for senior citizens, low income Canadians and other Canadians.

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I point out that I have a statement by the minister which says that the CMHC capital spending budget is to be increased 12 per cent this year. Ontario is increasing its spending by 50 per cent in this area. In the face of this major shift in federal housing policy—as indeed there has been—away from socially assisted housing to assistance for those in middle income groups, will the minister undertake to refer to committee the capital spending budget of CMHC so that there can be parliamentary investigation of this major shift in housing policy.

Mr. Danson: Mr. Speaker, I cannot accept the premise of the question. Making available \$175 million in loans for public housing is hardly a downgrading of responsibility. Certainly, the question of capital budgets will be open for discussion when estimates will be before the committee shortly. If the hon. member's representations are being made on behalf of the province of Ontario, I can only say they have a strange way of getting co-operation.