

Oral Questions

HOUSING

REASON FOR DELAY IN APPROVAL OF TREFANN COURT
RENEWAL PROJECT

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. In view of the fact that on May 28 of this year Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation approved in principle a mortgage application from Trefann Homes Corporation to build 17 houses in the first phase of the Trefann Court urban renewal project, and since it is urgent that an immediate start be made on the project so as to avoid escalation of building costs, may I ask whether CMHC has given final approval to the application and, if not, what is the reason for the long delay?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): I take it the question is based on press reports which I also saw this morning. Apparently the difficulty is that only one bid was received for the construction of this project and this has made an evaluation of the costs and the rents which will flow from those costs more difficult. However, I have instructed CMHC to process this application immediately because I share the hon. member's anxiety that this development should go ahead as soon as possible.

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[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PUBLICATION OF POSITION OF GOVERNMENT AT NEXT
LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE—CONSULTATION WITH
PROVINCES

Mr. Alexandre Cyr (Gaspé): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

On September 17, the minister advised the House that he would issue a document stating the government position at the forthcoming UN conference on the Law of the Sea. Can the minister tell us whether consultations with the provinces are completed and whether he soon intends to table his white paper in the House?

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I answered a similar question last week. I am now in a position to say that the paper is in the final drafting stages and will be tabled in the next few days.

REPORTED CONFLICT BETWEEN MINISTER AND MINISTER
OF FISHERIES RESPECTING CANADA'S POSITION AT NEXT
LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): I have a supplementary question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Last Thursday in Newfoundland the Minister of Fisheries presented for discussion purposes a paper in which he outlined the position Canada would take at the forthcoming Law of the Sea Conference. Following the meeting, press reports indicated there was conflict

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

between the minister and his colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and that the latter does not go along with the recommendations of the Minister of Fisheries. Will the minister now assure the House that this is not so and that he accepts the position the Minister of Fisheries is putting forward with respect to the position Canada will take at the conference?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): I am completely unaware of such a conflict. The paper I shall be presenting represents the joint work of the two departments and the two ministers.

Mr. Carter: I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Fisheries. Is the minister now able to tell the House whether Canada's delegation to this conference will take with them a back-up plan for presentation in the event that the recommendations made by this country are not acceptable to the other nations?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries): If the hon. member means a back-down plan, the answer is no.

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ENERGY

TAR SANDS OIL—GOVERNMENT POSITION RESPECTING
TAXATION OF SYNCRUDE AND IMPORTANCE OF PROJECT

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance. It relates to the answers he gave yesterday concerning the meeting he held with Alberta ministers on the tar sands proposal. Would the minister tell us whether he agrees that the Syncrude project is most important to the nation and must go ahead at all costs? If this is his view, what are his instructions to his colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, with regard to the modification of the tax problems which face Syncrude, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources having said they would remain?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): There is no difference between myself and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources regarding the approach to these negotiations. We both agree that the Syncrude project is a very important one for the future of Canada. At the moment we are reviewing the arrangements between the companies which make up that consortium and the province of Alberta to see whether they can be fitted in with the announced guidelines related to federal resource taxation policy.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Has the minister said that the project must go ahead at all costs?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I did not add the last three words, Mr. Speaker.