

ket—things like reduction in sales tax, assistance on down payments, subsidized mortgage rates—can the Acting Prime Minister say whether the government is approaching the banks in order to get them to lower their interest rates so as not to nullify the existing programs?

**Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of State for Science and Technology):** If I may, Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice.

**Mr. Saltsman:** Mr. Speaker, I would much rather have an answer than have my question taken as notice. It is an important question. Perhaps I might direct this question, then, to the very interested Minister of State for Urban Affairs, if I can get his attention. I ask the minister whether he is speaking to his colleagues and bringing to their attention the fact that this increase in mortgage interest rates by the banks will destroy his whole program of Assisted Home Ownership.

**Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, we are very much concerned about mortgage interest rates. I have not spoken to my colleague the Minister of Finance. He is in the Middle East, and I was not invited. I will be consulting with him on his return, but I can assure the House that Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation is in direct contact with the banks. The president has been in direct contact. I am meeting with other representatives today. This is a situation we are monitoring closely. We do not want to see the effects of the interest subsidy nullified. We want to see a realistic mortgage market which works to help build homes.

**Mr. Saltsman:** Since people from CMHC are in touch with the banks, as the minister has indicated, could the minister inform this House whether they are simply going there to find out what is happening or whether they are going with instructions to tell the banks to lower interest rates?

**Mr. Danson:** The corporation does not have the power to instruct the banks. We are discussing the situation to encourage more low interest money into the market and into housing. The important thing now is to see that that money is flowing under the new legislation, which was just passed, at the lowest possible rate, and that is what we are trying to negotiate, but we cannot instruct.

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[Translation]

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

##### DANGER FROM FLOATING LOGS ON OTTAWA RIVER— GOVERNMENT ACTION

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of the Environment.

Can the minister say whether her department is watching over the environmental situation of the Ottawa River, especially in this period of thaw, because the floating of logs which is about to begin may endanger the lives of both tourists and sportsmen who are using these waters. Is

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the department taking the necessary steps to ensure the safety of users?

**Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, this would be normally a provincial responsibility, but as this is within the National Capital area, I have taken the initiative of having the past record of the Ottawa River opened a few months ago to examine this question of logs floating down the river. I shall probably be able to table a report on this in the near future.

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[English]

#### ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

##### FILES IN POSSESSION OF DR. SHULMAN—REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION—SUGGESTED ACTION AGAINST DR. SHULMAN

**Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. I appreciate that because of the experimental rules under which we are working, perhaps the Solicitor General may not have had the chance to do what I thought he was going to do. He was to correct an answer that he gave me yesterday in regard to the most recent allegations of Dr. Shulman. This matter was discussed in the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs last night but because it was a very direct answer in the House yesterday and, I suggest, an incorrect answer which I thought the minister wanted to correct, I wonder if he would tell us now what he knows about the allegations in regard to documents in Dr. Shulman's hands that involved political and union leaders in the land, one of the documents having been sent to the minister.

● (1120)

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to correct an answer I gave in the House yesterday. Unfortunately, I did not hear the question properly, I suppose due to the noise that was going on around me.

**An hon. Member:** Use your earphone.

**Mr. Allmand:** I always use my earphone.

**An hon. Member:** Turn it on.

**Mr. Allmand:** I apologized to the hon. member in committee last night. I did correct my answer with respect to the question he put. Of course, we are not aware of what files Dr. Shulman has, but I can tell the House there is no policy to keep files on political or labour leaders. They may be investigated like everyone else if they are suspected of crime or subversion. Dr. Shulman did send me part of one file that had been stolen and leaked to him. That file was from criminal intelligence files and it was not with respect to a political or labour figure but with respect to a person known in organized crime. I do not know what other files he might have but there is no policy of keeping files on political or labour figures although they may be investigated if suspected of an offence.