

Inquiries of the Ministry

Since the government proposes to mark Canada day, on July 1, by the issue of a stamp depicting the new Canadian flag, does the minister also intend to mark the Queen's birthday by the issue of a stamp representing the union jack, our second flag, which symbolizes our allegiance to the crown and our adhesion to the commonwealth?

[Text]

Mr. Speaker: Surely this is a question for the order paper.

HEALTH AND WELFARE**ROYAL COMMISSION REPORT—INQUIRY AS TO CONFERENCE WITH PROVINCES**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. William Dean Howe (Hamilton South): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Is there any truth in the assumption that the government is evading the federal-provincial conference on the Hall commission report in the hope that the provinces will each develop their own health plans and relieve the federal government of this responsibility?

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Minister of National Health and Welfare): None whatever, Mr. Speaker.

HOUSING**REPORTED REDUCTION IN BUILDING STARTS IN JANUARY**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Eric A. Winkler (Grey-Bruce): I have a question for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, who is responsible for the operation of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, concerning housing starts in the month of January. It is reported that housing starts in that month dropped by some 21.4 per cent. I wonder if the minister will say whether he feels the full application of the 11 per cent sales tax would be responsible in any way for this drop.

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am glad I have been asked this question, because I can assure the house there is every indication, notwithstanding the fact that housing starts may have been down in the month of January, that this will be the largest year in house building in the history of Canada. I am in the happy position also of being able to say that last year was the record year in our history. My officials in Central Mort-

gage and Housing Corporation advise me that the reason housing starts may have been down slightly in the month of January—I have the figures before me—was the unusual high percentage of starts in the months of November and December to take advantage of the government's winter works incentive program.

[Later:]

May I supplement the answer I just gave to the hon. member for Grey-Bruce. He referred to the fact that possibly the sales tax might have affected the number of housing starts in January. Consequently I feel I should advise the hon. member and the house that probably one reason for the acceleration of starts in the last two or three months of 1964 was the fact that the people concerned very properly wanted to buy their materials before December 31.

Mr. Winkler: May I ask a supplementary question. I appreciate the explanation the minister gives now, because now we know why there was the increase at the end of that particular year. He mentioned the probability of this year being greater than last year, but there are other probabilities too, Mr. Speaker.

INCOME TAX**QUEBEC—AVAILABILITY OF FORMS IN FRENCH LANGUAGE**

On the orders of the day:

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Perron (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Revenue.

The intention, it is claimed, with the new income tax form was to simplify the taxpayer's job, but is the minister aware of the fact that in some areas in the province of Quebec income tax forms in English only are being sent to post offices in that province?

[Text]

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, in the province of Quebec post offices should have a supply of both French and English forms.

[Translation]

Mr. Perron: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. During the week end I received several complaints, mainly from Tring Junction and Ste Marie Beauce where, on two different occasions, income tax forms in English only were sent over.