

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

TRANSPORT

**TROIS-RIVIÈRES—PROTESTS RESPECTING
INCREASE IN SEAWAY TOLLS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J.-A. Mongrain (Trois-Rivières): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport and I assure him that this is not the kind of question that will raise blood pressure.

Can the minister advise the house whether he received this morning a telegram from the directors of the national harbours at Trois-Rivières, objecting to any increase in tolls on the St. Lawrence seaway or in the Welland canal, and mentioning also that the Trois-Rivières city council last night passed a unanimous resolution asking the minister to do something to prevent such toll increases?

[English]

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, just before coming into the house I made some inquiries, but up to that point no such telegram had reached my office.

POLLUTION

**REQUEST FOR REPLY TO TELEGRAM OF
CALGARY ASSOCIATION**

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I do not expect the Acting Prime Minister will be able to make an immediate reply to my question but it is an urgent one and requires some answer very soon. Mr. Cronkite, chairman of the Calgary Fish and Game Association, sent a telegram to the Prime Minister last week asking for a declaration by the government of Canada on the subject of pollution. Since the meeting of the association takes place tomorrow, will the Acting Prime Minister make sure that a reply is sent?

Hon. Paul Martin (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I shall be glad to look into this matter.

HOUSING

**INQUIRY AS TO INTRODUCTION OF FURTHER
LEGISLATION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Heward Graftey (Brome-Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, in view of the answer given yesterday by the Minister of Labour in respect of Canada's current housing crisis, I should

like to ask him whether the government intends to take action before the end of the current session in order to give some hope to many Canadians who right now are looking for decent housing facilities.

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the question as to what should be done and when in the housing field is under constant review by the government. We have already taken many progressive steps which now are having beneficial results. When we decide on further steps an announcement will be made at that time.

Mr. Graftey: I have a supplementary question. In view of the urgency of the situation and the necessity of taking immediate action, can the minister inform the house now that his cross-country symposiums and study sessions are to be brought to an end?

Mr. Nicholson: If the hon. member had been following the newspapers he would know they have been concluded.

Mr. D. V. Pugh (Okanagan Boundary): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance which is not based on a newspaper or any other report but on a statement made by the governor of the Bank of Canada concerning the drop in Canadian housing starts. Will the minister now consider removing the sales tax on building materials?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Graftey: I have a further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the minister's remarks regarding the newspaper reports, can he now inform the house what have been the results of the symposiums, and when we can expect definite action, in view of the present crisis?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is asking for a ministerial statement and this cannot be done on questions.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**SUGGESTED DECREASE IN AMOUNT OF
FOREIGN AID**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Royal): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I am wondering how the minister reconciles the decrease in the over-all foreign aid program, as disclosed in the estimates, with the following statement