

the adequacy of the government's housing program. In the course of my remarks, I want to say something about both.

It is important to be aware in this House that there is, in terms of commitment, an acceptance on the part of the New Democratic Party that housing has to be established now and has to be done at the federal level to ensure that it has a national foundation. Housing has to be established as a basic right of Canadian citizenship in the way that, after some serious years of work and development, education many decades ago and more recently medicare were established as basic rights for all citizens. We begin on that assumption and then ask how we have to deal with the economy in any given situation to ensure that that assumption can be fulfilled.

Mr. Yewchuk: Say something useful.

Mr. Broadbent: The hon. member says, say something useful. That brilliant, incisive repartee came from a member to my right. I listened to the official spokesman for the Conservative party two days in a row and heard nothing but highly convoluted rhetoric. There was not one systematic demonstration of any thinking that supposedly went on at his party's convention just over a week ago, where presumably they developed an urban affairs program. There was no outline of what that party intends to do. I say to my hon. friend, with all the modesty I can muster, will he kindly shut up and listen to what I have to say. Perhaps he will learn something about social philosophy and, related to that, something about what the hell can be done in terms of practical reality in Canada. Our party takes both of those objectives seriously. I know it is difficult for a Conservative to understand that kind of approach in politics, but I ask him to be patient and at least allow an exponent of that view to have his say.

● (1620)

As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted in such a silly fashion, our party begins with the assumption that we have to organize our economy to ensure that a right to housing is established for all Canadians. I should like to refer to a series of articles which appeared some four weeks ago in the *New Yorker* magazine, hardly a paragon of socialist thought. They were written by a man named Goodwin who raises this subject in a most serious, imaginative and coherent way. He deals with the kind of question I am trying to raise about housing. What he says in terms of all our human priorities, and he is speaking as a thoughtful American, is that the economy has got out of control, totally beyond the control of individual action. What he called for, in his pessimistic conclusion, was a reinjection of action from below, right outside the political sphere, the ultimate objective being that people should get control of the economic system to provide for the kind of social objectives which our community so badly needs. Hon. members to my right in the Conservative Party continue, of course, in their merry 18th Century way, with the exception of two or three honourable and thoughtful members. The rest of them still come out with notions which I thought had disappeared a decade after Adam Smith. So much for a rhetorical reaction to a rhetorical outburst.

Urban Affairs

The approach to housing by both the government and the Conservative party has been essentially to tinker with the market system. That has been the overriding approach to meeting this social objective. It would be as absurd as to have used such an approach to solve our education needs, or to have taken that approach during the debates on medicare in the 'fifties and 'sixties. We gave it up then, we took those areas of the life out of the market system, but the old parties still want to leave housing within that framework and under the control of the market economy. I think that when you begin with such an assumption you begin with a fundamental error which will have a significant impact on all the "practical" proposals you make as a government or as an official opposition.

I do not intend to trot out all the statistical information which was provided by myself during my contribution in the debate on the Address, and, indeed, provided by other members in my party as well as members of other parties in recent weeks—

Mr. Gilbert: The Tories did not bother to speak on housing in that debate.

Mr. Broadbent: That's right. The Conservative party offered no spokesman on housing during the debate on the Address. I shall not document what has been documented by myself and others in recent weeks here. The fact is, we have housing crisis of very significant proportions, particularly in urban Canada, partly because we now find the post world war two babies coming on to the housing market. We had them in terms of a crisis in elementary schools and we had them at the high school level a few years ago, we had them at the university level and now they are married and having children of their own so they are on the housing market creating a problem the like of which we have not seen before in housing. It will get worse during the next few years. What is required?

Let me just mention at this point the project, Urban Demonstration. Is this what is required to deal with that kind of crisis? Do we need to spend \$100 million to do even what the minister has outlined today? I will just go back a bit on that. When the minister came into the House two weeks ago tomorrow and made his announcement on a day when we had just been reminded once again of the escalation in the cost of living, he said nothing about what the real details of that program were to be. He provided us with not one whit of information of the kind he outlined in his speech this afternoon. So I, for one, am somewhat reassured that the objectives of that \$100 million program are in principle good ones, and I would say that at least in principle the \$100 million program is a good one now. Two weeks ago I thought, in terms of what the minister himself had said, in terms of the limited information we were given in this House, it was going to be money wasted.

But I want to add immediately that in terms of our priorities in allocating \$100 million, it is still my judgment that it is the wrong spending at the wrong time and for the wrong program. I do not retract that judgment. I do modify the statement I made that I thought the spending was going to be totally wasted. I do not think it will be totally wasted. I simply think, in terms of meeting the pressing problem, we need to spend in other areas. What are those other areas?