

*Corporate and Consumer Affairs*

[English]

I wish to make one further suggestion to C.M.H.C. which I trust the new ministry will keep in mind. For far too long the Canadian house buyer, although protected from structural and basic construction defects by C.M.H.C. standards and provincial laws, has not been adequately protected against finishing defects. Only a minority of house builders are guilty of producing poorly finished houses, but the unfortunate house buyer who discovers that he has acquired a shoddily finished house must engage expensive legal services, if he is to be able to force the builder to fulfil his contractual responsibilities.

In most cases the buyer is too far in debt, because of buying and furnishing his new home, to afford legal services. The builders know this and take advantage of the buyer's position. The builders who get away with deficient finishing are usually the same ones who have purchasers sign purchase offers which are phrased in a way which result in a buyer signing up for more than he bargained for.

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation may have fulfilled its legal obligations under the National Housing Act, limiting its responsibility to maintaining basic construction standards; but it has, I submit, a much broader social responsibility for consumer protection which it has not fulfilled, but could quite easily be put into effect. I would request that the minister of consumer affairs ask C.H.M.C., if this body does not act on its own, to consider without delay the following proposals: That a blacklist be established of all builders who have been the subject of verified, legitimate and well-founded complaints by home buyers to C.M.H.C.; the establishment of a blacklist of delinquent home builders or, alternatively, the creation of a register of the names of those home construction companies who have a complaint free record. This would have an immediate and highly beneficial effect on the house finishing practices of delinquent house building companies. Also an appeal procedure could easily be established which would satisfy the responsible house builders. If hon. members will bear with me, I suggest that the blacklist of complaint free builders be distributed to the public by C.M.H.C. or through the department of consumer affairs. It could be distributed by public libraries, consumer groups and a broad selection of associations and public bodies.

[Mr. Watson (Châteauguay-Huntingdon-Laprairie).]

**The Assistant Deputy Chairman:** Order, please.

**Mr. Watson (Châteauguay-Huntingdon-Laprairie):** I suggest that such a house buyer protection policy would produce immediate and dramatic improvements for average Canadian house purchasers, and I would urge the minister and C.M.H.C. to give these suggestions their immediate consideration.

**The Assistant Deputy Chairman:** While the hon. member did have the last word, may I tell him that I was at a loss to relate the remarks he was making to the clause under study.

Clause 6 agreed to

On clause 7—*Advisory and other bodies.*

**Mr. Baldwin:** Mr. Chairman, this clause reads as follows:

The governor in council may establish a consumer advisory council and other bodies to advise or assist the minister or to perform such duties and functions as the governor in council may specify—

And so on. Originally I had intended to move a amendment to this clause. However the minister has been obdurate and inflexible and his juggernauts, the backbenchers on the government side, have spoken in opposition to amendments coming from this side of the house. I would urge the minister, Mr. Chairman, to accept the removal of the words "and other bodies" from this clause.

● (9:50 p.m.)

**Mr. Churchill:** Mr. Chairman, while the minister is thinking about that, may I support the suggestion which has been made. Clause 7 is almost a blank cheque to the minister because in it he does not set out the function of advisory boards, as was done so carefully in part II of the bill with regard to the manpower and immigration council, which was earlier before the house. He has simply written in what amounts to a wide open paragraph giving him complete power to set up an advisory council and other bodies. He does not specify how often they will be called together nor what will be their composition. This clause will give the minister too much authority, and now that he has had time to think over the suggestion made by the hon. member for Peace River perhaps he will modify it by striking out "and other bodies", or else explain to us what he intends to do under this clause.

**Mr. Turner:** Mr. Chairman, I accept that deletion.