

*National Housing Act*

the government has had no objection at all not only to permitting municipalities to contribute subsidies but—yes—to compelling municipalities to contribute subsidies, if they wanted any of these government-built houses made available to them.

Remember that these houses were made available to municipalities only on the basis of the municipality offering land free of charge, and providing municipal services; yes, and then being content with a return in lieu of taxes which did not begin to compare with the tax that the houses in question would have paid if they had been privately constructed and privately owned.

Yes, the municipalities have been called upon to bear an unfairly heavy share of the load; and this government is responsible for imposing on the municipalities conditions so grievously heavy and onerous that they have been beyond the powers of many municipalities to meet.

I spoke a moment ago about legislation, about one housing bill before the Ontario legislature at its recent session. The parliamentary assistant this afternoon chose to go out of his way to disparage the nature of the bill passed by the Ontario legislature—and, incidentally, unanimously enacted with the participation of all parties in the house, including the Liberal party, or what little there is left of it in the Ontario legislature; he chose to disparage the bill—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I would call the hon. member's attention to the fact that on second reading of the bill, hon. members should discuss the principle. I think I have been too generous in the latitude I have allowed; but if the hon. member would read the explanatory note on the second page of the bill he would find that what he is saying is out of order. Then, if he will read the amendment he must also find that his remarks are not directed to the amendment.

Mr. FLEMING: Mr. Speaker, you know the very great respect in which I hold your views and your rulings. But I may remind Your Honour that when you were not in the chair this afternoon the parliamentary assistant was permitted to discuss this Ontario bill referred to, and in disparaging terms. I do not propose to discuss the bill in detail, but it was referred to in this chamber this afternoon.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member knows perfectly well that the debate cannot continue along that line. I would ask him to confine his remarks to the principle of the bill, or to the amendment before the house.

Mr. FLEMING: Mr. Speaker, I seek to give the house the alternative this party would [Mr. Fleming.]

offer to the people of Canada for the kind of policy which this government has laid down for itself, and which it is proposing to follow out. It has been mentioned in the debate; and this bill, and the amendment to it, are to be measured in the light of that policy. The anticipated efficacy of the bill can be measured only in the light of the experience this parliament has had in connection with government administration of housing legislation in the past. I think you will appreciate the relevancy of the reference that I sought to make a moment ago. It is high time that this government assumed the responsibility of taking the initiative in calling into conference the provinces and the municipalities with a view to mapping out a program to meet this housing problem.

I want to point out, in reference to the legislation in Ontario, how it demonstrates the desire of the Ontario legislature for a meeting on this question and to assist in every way possible.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will realize that in this house we deal only with federal legislation, not provincial legislation. I would ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the bill under consideration.

Mr. FLEMING: I shall leave it at that. I only wish the same ruling had been given by those who were in the chair in your absence. Disparaging remarks should not be permitted to be placed on the record without an opportunity being given to correct and answer them.

Mr. McILRAITH: The hon. member should remember the argument he used earlier this afternoon on the point of order.

Mr. FLEMING: The parliamentary assistant is chuckling over the fact that he got his remarks on the record while I cannot get mine on. That is his idea of fairness.

It is apparent to all by this time that for this government to sit back and not make any attempt to enlist general co-operation when general co-operation is available on the part of the provinces and the municipalities is to fail again. Apparently the government is quite content to fall back upon this worn-out excuse of not being able to do some things because of the constitution. Apparently it would rather have those excuses available for doing nothing than to cut through the knot and call a conference with a view to obtaining co-operative effort by the municipalities and the provinces.

An hon. MEMBER: George Drew.

Mr. FLEMING: They would be glad to come. The government that someone over yonder has just referred to would be glad to