

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Mr. Martin P. O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, as hon. members will recall, the minister responsible for housing has agreed to make a statement on motions in the near future on the general subject of urban renewal.

In so far as the situation in Vancouver East is concerned, as I think the hon. member who asked the question is aware, the city of Vancouver has made an application for assistance under section 23B for the Strathcona section only of the total 1,300-acre area No. 3. As the minister indicated to the hon. member recently, he had the opportunity to visit this area and to talk to many of its residents when he was in Vancouver in August to meet the Hon. Dan Campbell, Minister of Municipal Affairs for the province of British Columbia. On August 7, he met with the mayor and members of council of the city of Vancouver. The representatives of the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association were also present. As a result of these meetings it was agreed that the real need in this area appeared to be one of finding ways and means of assisting the citizens in rehabilitating and upgrading their properties and to involve the people concerned in the total process. The earlier proposals of the city contemplated acquisition and clearance of most of the properties in the area.

The National Housing Act contains no provisions for grants or subsidies to assist people of low income in the repair and rehabilitation of privately-owned residential properties. It seemed apparent that the citizens of Strathcona area considered such aids to be necessary in their case. Therefore, it has been arranged with the city and the province as well as with the Strathcona property owners and Tenants Association, that a committee should be appointed with representatives from the city, the province and Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation as well as the association charged with the responsibility of formulating proposals for the rehabilitation of one or two blocks within the area.

A condition to the minister's agreement is that the residents of the area are given the fullest opportunity to participate in the selection of the site and in the terms of reference for the proposed study. Since that time a working committee has been organized under the chairmanship of the director of the Vancouver social welfare department. The Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association is represented on the committee, as are

[Mr. Winch.]

officials of the province and of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Continuing meetings at about weekly intervals have been held since October 1. The committee has agreed to the principle of the residents' association engaging consultants to assist in the definition of a one or two block area which may be the subject of an experimental rehabilitation project and as well to assist in examining the buildings in this area to establish what might be done.

Mr. Winch: That is only 40 acres out of 1,350.

Mr. O'Connell: That is the only area in respect of which the city of Vancouver has made application for an implementation scheme. City officials are examining the area to ascertain—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

SOCIAL SECURITY—INQUIRY AS TO ESTABLISHMENT OF INCOME FLOOR

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): On November 5, Mr. Speaker, I asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) if, in view of his recent expressions of concern about people on low income and in view of the representations made in Halifax to the Senate Committee on Poverty, the government was now prepared to consider establishing an income floor below which no Canadian would be allowed to fall. The Prime Minister very courteously replied that the government was not yet satisfied that this was a realistic step.

Two days later the government published its white paper on tax reform. It proposed, among other things, to raise income tax levels from the present levels of \$1,000 for a single person and \$2,000 for a married couple to \$1,400 for a single person and \$2,800 for a married couple. By this very proposal the government admits that several million Canadians are now living below acceptable income levels. The fact that three-quarters of a million taxpayers are now going to be dropped from the rolls because their income is too pitifully low to tax is the strongest argument anyone could advance for the need to establish a guaranteed income in Canada.

As I listened to the debate this afternoon on the motion of the hon. member for Fort William (Mr. Badanai) I had the distinct impression that some members on the government side of the House have the idea that if