

*National Housing Act*

a small area that there was entirely inadequate provision for grass and trees around them, and with the number of children who obviously would be making use of these small areas the project was nothing more than a slum in the making. I mention this, Mr. Chairman, because I hope that one of the results of this resolution will be that we will undertake no more public housing projects which will be so obviously short of funds as this one must have been.

● (4:20 p.m.)

The matter I wish to draw to the attention of the Minister and the House has to do with the need for housing in other than urban areas. I do so because certainly in my part of British Columbia, and I believe increasingly in other parts of Canada, there are going to come into being what are known as instant towns, to use a phrase now popular on the British Columbia coast. These instant towns are towns in which there is usually one but sometimes more large industrial plants, and living facilities and amenities are required for the people who work in these plants. They are coming into being in what have heretofore been almost unoccupied, semi-isolated areas. From some of the representations that have been made to me, the schemes under which they are being developed make the problems of individual Canadians, especially of home ownership, far from easy.

I am sure we all agree that the cost of the removal of old buildings in the degenerate areas of a city is a fairly heavy one. The provision made for Federal assistance in a case of this kind of development is something that is quite necessary. I hardly need to remind the present Minister who is responsible for housing that when it comes to bringing into instant being a community in some of the rugged parts of British Columbia, the cost of creating an area of landscape on which to build a house and the ancillary facilities is also very expensive. As we look to the development of some of the undeveloped areas of Canada, as we look into the northern regions of Canada, as we increase our exploitation of our mineral resources of this country as well as our forest resources, the problems of providing communities of this kind are something which more and more should receive the attention of those who are interested in the provision of proper housing for Canadians.

In the Province of British Columbia we have had for a long time what were known

[Mr. Barnett.]

as company towns. I had some experience during part of my boyhood of living in one of these communities. I have had plenty of opportunity for observing at first hand some of the problems, some of the limitations of the basic human rights and freedoms that have existed in the past as a result of this type of community. Certainly I, for one, welcome the fact that most of the industrial corporations who are now concerned with the development and processing of our natural resources appear more and more to be trying to get away from this idea of building company towns, where the company owns everything lock, stock and barrel and where the provision of the amenities of a community are dependant upon the whims or fancies or temporary good will of the management of the company. This is a development I welcome.

On the other hand, I think we should not be unaware of the dangers inherent in this situation, which basically is a good one. It is that some of these industrial companies may show an inclination to simply shuck off all of the social and community responsibilities with respect to their employees, which in earlier years they felt necessary to assume. It is with this type of problem that I feel we should perhaps be more concerned than we have been up to the present time. It is a problem that, so far as I can see, while we are making an allocation of an increased amount of money in other directions in this resolution, we are not making any particular appropriation to deal with.

Now, Mr. Chairman, one of the nice little booklets provided to those attending the symposium is entitled, "Federal-Provincial Housing and Land Assembly". This booklet points out that under Section 35A of the National Housing Act and complementary provincial legislation, the Federal Government and the government of a province may enter into a partnership agreement to do a number of things. One of these is the assembling of raw land for development purposes. I feel that this is a part of the Housing Act that requires more attention in this House than the Minister may heretofore have given it. The situation that appears to be developing, and I have here a newspaper clipping that refers to a particular community, seems to bear out what I have felt was the case. The people who are going to be asked to live in these communities, who are going to be asked to take on the responsibility of acquiring home ownership, are going to have to do so almost entirely on their own, with the proviso that