

*Housing*

conference in the Maritimes to discuss ways and means of building co-operative houses in that area and to develop techniques with regard to the purchase of materials for mass production building. I thought he would deal with the problem of shell housing in the Maritimes and Newfoundland and give some assistance in that respect. I thought he would deal with the open systems approach which has been developed by co-op housing groups and experimented upon in that field, whereby they integrate parts, they have mass production techniques, and have rationalized building techniques.

● (2:20 p.m.)

I thought the minister would also deal with moneys and the question of whether they were going to churches or not. Many churches across the country have the necessary vacant land upon which to build homes but they do not have enough interim financing for architectural and other administrative costs. I thought the minister would help trade unions with regard to their house building problems and assist them in land assembly.

The problem of mobile homes is one to which some of these moneys could be directed. The hon. member for Fraser Valley West and other hon. members have urged that the minister take steps with regard to assisting people in mobile homes.

I also thought that the minister would direct certain moneys to the development of homes for the Indian and Métis people that would be suitable to their particular areas and climatic conditions.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I thought that the minister would say he was setting up a crown building corporation which would specialize in building homes for low income groups, that he would use the facilities of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to meet engineering and architectural problems and the research facilities of the National Research Council to develop new building products, and use Polymer Corporation to manufacture these new products.

The statement is disappointing in that it is not bold and imaginative; it is dull and dreary. I would hope that the second-phase statement by the minister will be more exciting and challenging and more productive as a result of incorporating the suggestions of the opposition parties.

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[*Translation*]

**Mr. C.-A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I will only indulge in a few brief remarks to express our satisfaction following the minister's announcement on housing. We hope that these \$200 million in subsidies will be well received everywhere in Canada and mainly in the province of Quebec.

I do not want to enumerate everything the minister should have done. I merely want to say that we are satisfied with this announcement as a first step toward the improvement of the housing situation. However, I see that these funds are only intended for important urban centres and will be available to large contractors and, as always, the construction of low-priced housing is neglected.

There is no doubt that we always keep in mind the welfare of the citizens of our regions, and if the minister could some day announce a decrease in interest rates in order to promote the building of low-priced family units this would encourage our local contractors.

I do not live in a large urban centre, but since we always do as the United States do, I think the minister should have a look at what is going on there. In fact, our southern neighbour has started to reduce interest rates and I believe that if the Canadian government were to do likewise, this would be a first step giving a new start to the building of low-cost family units in our regions.

Today, while loans are granted at 10 and 10.5 per cent, the man who would like to build a small house for his family is not encouraged to do so. If he decides to build a \$6,000 or \$7,000 house, he will have to pay back \$14,000, \$15,000 or \$20,000. And when the government claims that it is helping low income families, while at the same time, it allows finance companies and banks to charge such interest rates, I say that this is all a big joke. In my opinion, as long as no decision is taken to standardize interest rates, nothing will have been done to help build low-cost family units.

We wholeheartedly hope that announcing within the next few months the second stage of his program, the minister will state that his first objective was to reduce interest rates.