

that no subsidies are provided. I would have no quarrel with the provision of subsidies for the purpose of providing decent housing accommodation for those who otherwise will not be able to afford it. I have said that before in this chamber and I do not need to repeat my position in that respect. But I do not think the committee will enjoy being told that there are no subsidies in the provision of this housing. When we come to examine the matter further we find that in effect and indirectly subsidies are provided here.

In the first place, what is the cost of the land taken into the project? One dollar per building lot. That is a subsidy which the municipality is required to provide if they want houses built—one dollar per building lot; and I know from my experience with this corporation in the city of Toronto that they were very "choosy" about the lots they took. Areas which had been held by the city for substantial sums, running into two and three thousand dollars for the better locations, this corporation insisted on buying at a dollar a lot. Do not let us be told that there are no subsidies here.

That is not all. If we examine the standard contract which the minister has just tabled, and look at sections 7 and 8, we shall see that there is a fixed amount to be paid in respect of each of these houses in lieu of taxes. Section 7 provides an annual amount of \$24 for some houses and \$30 in respect of others, and section 8 provides for the sum of \$1 being collected in respect of each house for street lighting services and so on. In section 9 we have the provision that there is to be no realty tax levied by the municipality with respect to the house. If we are to have subsidies—and we should have them in proper cases—let us not have hidden subsidies. Parliament and the people of Canada ought to understand that there are indirect subsidies involved in the cost of construction, for the figures we are being offered here to-day of the cost of production are not the whole story.

We are told that 7,000 houses will be built for \$30,000,000. That is an average of \$4,200, or \$4,300 per house. That does not take into account a cost of more than \$1 per building lot. I offer that by way of correction which I think, in view of the information given to the committee, is necessary.

We are told this afternoon that this undertaking is entirely independent of the undertaking, Housing Enterprises of Canada Limited, this new corporation set up with \$25,000,000 capital by a number of insurance companies and financial institutions of the country. The government, through the Minister of Finance,

under part II of the housing act, provides ninety per cent of the capital, and the corporation jointly provides the other ten per cent for the formation of this limited-dividend housing corporation. We are told that these things are absolutely independent of one another. If there is not some attempt to unify government policy with respect to these various schemes to provide needed housing, we shall have continued competition between government departments, and more confusion; and, goodness knows, there is enough confusion now in government policy. One of the things most urgently needed in the housing field at the present time is a proper coordination of government housing policies. There has been too much confusion, with three departments running in three different directions, and there is great need at the present time of unification of government policy.

I come now to this matter of the requisitioning of building materials. In this respect I wish to emphasize what I have just said, because here is a first-class illustration of the fact that there is no unity in government policy with respect to housing. I think it is fair to say that Wartime Housing Limited is one of the darlings—and I do not say this offensively—of the Minister of Munitions and Supply. The method pursued by that corporation has been that when they have required or wanted materials they have just stepped in to the producers and said, "We want your production for the next two months"—or three months, as the case may be. That was the method used. They stepped right in and requisitioned the materials from the producers.

What has been the result? The result has been chaos and confusion throughout the building trades of Canada. I do not require any further proof of the fact than simply to refer, by way of contrast, to the methods being pursued by the Department of Veterans Affairs in connection with the administration of the Veterans Land Act. There they have followed a sensible course by making their purchases direct from suppliers of building materials. The result has been an orderly meeting of needs.

But with Wartime Housing Limited that has not happened. There must be a high hand there. There must be a wielding of the big stick, when they step in to the producer and say, "Give us all your production for the next three months, regardless of what happens to the supply houses which have been waiting for those materials, and regardless of what happens to the private builders who are waiting on those supply houses to provide materials."