

### *Housing*

all the Toronto members are very familiar with because it was supposed to be utopia concerning housing in Ontario—in 1972 the book value, which is the cost of assembling, servicing and holding the land, was \$6,100 per lot. In 1976 the book value was \$11,760. More important, the market value is \$26,000.

**An hon. Member:** For a lot?

**Mr. Gilbert:** Yes, for a lot in the Malvern area. In Edmonton, in the Mill Woods development, which is land owned by the government of Alberta, lots sell for between \$10,000 and \$15,000. In the same city, lots owned by private individuals sell for between \$20,000 and \$30,000.

**An hon. Member:** That is right.

**Mr. Gilbert:** With regard to land assembly programs in Ontario, where they assembled land for the purpose of reducing the cost of land, they have now scrapped that program and are selling the land. In Kitchener they sold some lots with a \$3 million profit on a \$5 million investment—which is a 60 per cent profit. On that basis, if they sell the 23,000 acres which they possess, they will make \$540 million.

**An hon. Member:** Which company?

**Mr. Gilbert:** This is the Ontario government. I am drawing it to the attention of the Conservative party, because one of the main costs is land. Is it any wonder that we have high cost of housing, when governments put profits before people? With regard to vacancy rates, the latest report indicated there is a 2.3 per cent vacancy rate across the country, which is a shift from the 1.6 per cent vacancy rate in October. The experts indicate the vacancy rate, to have any impact, should be at least between 3 per cent and 5 per cent, and we are a far distance from that. In fact 18 of the 24 countries included in the survey are under the 2.3 per cent. It just indicates the importance of that.

● (1502)

My time is running very short, but I want to cover three areas. With regard to the transportation policies of the government, may I say that the Minister of Transport is cruel, crass and cocky. His policies have been disappointing and deceiving.

In Toronto on June 17, 1974, the Minister of Transport made the statement that \$270 million would go for transportation. Shortly after the Liberals were elected as the government, what did they do? They scrapped that \$270 million program on the basis that they had to show government restraint. The Toronto members screamed because of the serious problems of grade separation, commuter traffic, and rail relocation, but it fell on deaf ears.

What does the Minister of Transport do now with regard to housing? He announced a new urban transportation assistance program. It merges the moneys for the programs of railway relocation and crossing programs and commuter service programs. There is no new money. All he is doing is merging the moneys of those two programs and calling it an urban transportation assistance program. There is a need across the

[Mr. Gilbert.]

country for a transportation policy which will take care of the grade separations, rail relocations and commuter traffic. However, we have no direction or financial assistance from the government.

The Ontario minister of transportation, Mr. Snow, said that the recent program is nothing but stunting and does too much for too little. In Ontario alone, \$72 million is needed to take care of grade separations. The minister has offered \$49.5 million over three years to take care of grade separations, rail assistance, urban transportation and relocation. Is it any wonder that I say his policies are cruel, crass and cocky? If there was ever a time for job creation in the field of transportation it is now, and the government has failed.

The home insulation program refers to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. With a great deal of fanfare, the government announced it would spend \$1.4 billion over seven years, which amounts to \$200 million a year. We can appreciate the special case of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island because of their high energy costs to produce electricity. Therefore the \$500 non-taxable grant is justified. However, all of us on this side believe the other eight provinces should not be restricted to two-thirds of the cost of the insulation with a limit of \$350 which is taxable.

When you look at the \$1,400 million over seven years, which is \$200 million a year, and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) said last night if it were not taxable they would lose \$560 million, subtracting that from the \$1,400 million, it amounts to \$120 million a year in energy saving across the country for insulation.

Looking at Bill C-11, the government has given \$1.2 billion in tax savings and incentives to corporations and high income individuals, and is only prepared to give \$120 million to people who indulge in energy conservation. All I can say is that the government is not serious about energy conservation. Ministers are not serious about insulation and the insulation program. If they were, they would be putting a tight check on the manufacturers of home insulation materials and insulation installers other than a mere government monitoring department.

The government should have included within the insulating materials such things as storm windows, storm doors, and double glazing, which would help many people with regard to this problem. It should have consulted with the provinces with regard to the increased assessments and increased taxes people have had as a result of participating in the home insulation program. Is it any wonder that we in this party condemn the government and these three ministers in particular for their policies on housing, conservation, and transportation? It is really a cruel, crass and cocky approach that these three ministers have taken.

I notice I have a few minutes left. I am going to take advantage of them. If we are serious about housing we will set forth programs to produce reasonable housing for all Canadians. That can be done by government initiatives with regard to public housing, co-operative housing and non-profit housing in the social housing fields. Instead of paying more than 25 per cent, the target should be 20 per cent at the very most.