

Housing

For the past three or four years there has been rampant inflation. Tax policies, in conjunction with the inflation, have forced insurance companies to divert their capital from investment in single family dwellings or semi-detached units to high rise apartments. Therefore, the money has not been available where it is really needed. The reason for this diversion is that insurance companies receive an equity in the investment which affords them a much better return on their money. The city of Calgary has embarked on rather ambitious renewal schemes. These have been held up because of a freeze and lack of policy by this government. Because of the lack of these policies, the Sheganappi Village project in Calgary has been held up. If the federal government would make a decision, this project could be completed. It does not require any new programs, merely old programs to be implemented.

● (7:10 p.m.)

I do not wish to take much time, but I ought to point out a problem facing my constituents in Drumheller. That general area has been depressed for some time, largely because coal mining has stopped. Exercising commendable wisdom, the federal government decided to build a medium security penitentiary there. I believe that the building began late in August, 1967. The institution created problems because the employees needed houses. Mind you, we are not complaining about having the institution there because it would have created problems no matter where it was built. The federal government has the duty to solve those problems. Exercising a degree of foresight the federal government seems incapable of, the local authorities at Drumheller initiated an investigation. They wanted to ascertain whether it was possible to introduce some sort of urban renewal program which would make housing available for those employees working at the penitentiary. Although Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation had been involved in the program since 1965, the investigation was begun in 1968. Actually, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation was involved in every step taken. The City had annexed some land in 1966 and 1967.

There were problems to do with low rental housing which necessitated a visit on the part of officials to the former minister in charge of housing, Hon. J. R. Nicholson. He was surprised to hear of all the impediments set up by the Central Mortgage and Housing office in Calgary.

[Mr. Schumacher.]

Now, four years later, we have reached a stage where there has been an expenditure of \$35,000, half of which has been contributed by the federal government. The money has been put out in various studies and preliminary work. However, since the government seems unable to make up its mind, applications to go ahead with the scheme in our area have not been accepted. Only about 900 units are to be built under a rehabilitation scheme. No huge sums of money are involved, but the government will not act. The people of my constituency want the government to wake up and act. They want government members to quit their discussion of academic, constitutional problems and get down to business. There is no point in saying that you cannot get results under the present constitution, because you can.

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, without getting into any of the matters raised by previous speakers and without talking about why the minister resigned or why does the government not resign, may I, in an effort to secure the goodwill of the whip and in a special effort to pay a compliment to Mr. John Steel, Executive Director of the first Canadian Urban Transportation Conference held under the sponsorship of the Association of Canadian Mayors and Municipalities, put a few remarks on the record on an aspect that has been touched on obliquely only. There is a dominant form of urbanization in which the lack of firm planning has resulted in gigantic agglomerations of people in a relative tangle of land uses and overworked, inefficient transportation systems, half completed expressway networks, and an urban environment which is at best chaotic and at worst deadly. We are quite likely to have super-slums on a gigantic scale and a crippled economy if we persist in our neglect of regional planning and in our inattention to the urban environment.

Who wants the kind of Canada in which up to 90 per cent of Canadians are crowded into a few overcrowded and overbuilt metropolitan areas while the rest of the country is empty and poor? What is there to prevent this, the way things are now developing? What is there in present government legislation to prevent this from happening? Nothing I suggest, Mr. Speaker.

As the Economic Council of Canada has told us, most of the inhabitants of Canada in 1980 could be living in artificial environments. About 20 million people will live in a few huge cities. Toronto and Montreal will have a