

of relief and assistance to home owners. It would be interesting to see whether the minister would come forward with policies which would be of true and legitimate assistance to these people in times of very heavy financial pressure. Therefore, we asked ourselves whether this government would do something to alleviate the pressure of high interest rates and high property taxes imposed by municipalities. We wondered whether the government, in effect, would reconsider its previous position and support a policy we brought forward whereby the home owner could, in fact, receive some advantage by deducting interest paid on mortgages and municipal property taxes. I think these questions were legitimate. In budgetary terms, we wondered whether the government would bring forward provisions, as we did, which would allow the poor and the low and middle-income earners to receive some assistance from this government to help pay the increased costs of owning a home, similar to the energy tax provisions contained in our budget which would have given assistance to families. Under this government, increased costs of energy are rising far higher and to a more substantial degree than would have been the case under the energy agreement which we arranged with the province of Alberta. We found that the answer to our questions was "no". We waited for these answers, and we waited for pronouncements on the part of those ministers responsible in this administration, as to what we might expect concerning initiatives.

I must say that I took a random sampling of some of the press reports which have covered the pronouncements of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cosgrove) who is responsible for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation in particular. I do not have to go back very far. I can go back to September 9, 1981, when the headline of the *Toronto Star* stated, "Mortgage Relief Package is Coming, Cosgrove Predicts". I just want to quote this article, because this was a statement of the minister responsible for the housing policy in this administration, and one which I think we were entitled to take seriously, because we expect that when there are pronouncements by a minister responsible for housing of any government, we can find action which would follow those pronouncements. I will quote from the article as reported by Pat McNenly.

**Mr. Cosgrove:** Quote it all. Read it all.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, I only have 40 minutes in which to speak, and I do not want to embarrass the minister too much by quoting what he said in September, and then by finding that he reversed himself in October. I just want to make a point for the minister. I see a fleeting tinge of embarrassment cross his face, and the redness in his face is increasing. I will be kind and polite and just quote a—

**Mr. Cosgrove:** Do your worst! Just read it all.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** —dispassionate and non-partisan extract from this particular article so the minister can understand—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### *Housing*

**An hon. Member:** Just before the dinner hour.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** —the expectations we had of him.

I see the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms is coming because he is hungry, so I will call it six o'clock and we can start again at eight o'clock. I hope the minister will be present to hear my remarks.

**Mr. Cosgrove:** I want to hear it all!

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** In appreciation of the hon. member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn), and in view of the fact that the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms is hungry, I do now call it six o'clock p.m. The House will rise until eight o'clock this evening.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

### AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** When the House rose at six o'clock, the hon. member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn) had the floor.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, just before the supper hour, I had started to make reference to the fact that a lot of us in the House of Commons and people across Canada are very much interested and concerned about the direction in which the government is going with respect to its housing policy. It is as a result of a number of things that this has happened. I mentioned these factors. We had unprecedented interest rates which went over the 20 per cent mark, absolutely incredible, usurious interest rates. I was moved to observe at the time that the level of interest rates in this country was the rate which the criminal element used to extend to its least desirable clients, 22 or 23 per cent. That is an absolutely untoward, unbearable burden to place on the people of this country.

Also, we are facing an unprecedented rate of inflation. Items of repair, costs with respect to home ownership, the cost of equipping a modest home, are an additional burden to the average Canadian, especially those living on limited means such as senior citizens and young people starting off in life.

Quite apart from everything else, we are also facing a situation where in the context of inflation this government entered into an energy policy for this country which allowed an acceleration in price to the home owner which was absolutely unthinkable just a few months ago. This energy policy extended the energy costs to the home heating fuel of the average Canadian in a way that the government of which I was a member would have no part.

I know the minister is very sensitive about housing matters in this country, that he is attempting to prevail among his cabinet colleagues. I say to him in that context and in that battle he is waging with his colleagues and cabinet, that he has