

### *Housing*

whose attitudes and actions make housing succeed or fail as a valuable part of the quality of Canadian life.

Federal involvement in housing began with the Dominion Housing Act of 1935 and accelerated after the federal task force on housing and urban development in 1968, culminating in the establishment of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs in 1971. Housing, however, is a provincial responsibility in law and a regional responsibility by virtue of its character. Above all else, the business of urban affairs is not just to improve the supply of houses and roads; it is to improve the lives of the people who use them. Perhaps a story will illustrate how difficult it is. At a conference on the urban environment, discussions covered many related topics. After an hour or so the talk began to set specific problems in a wider context and to seek their fundamental causes. Eventually some long-term solutions were suggested. During lunch, two members of the group, one a politician and the other a senior official, began worrying about the more immediate concern of surviving the day to day pressures of re-election and red tape. The interesting thing is that they did not think to relate their ongoing lives and the specific problems of their responsibilities to the earlier discussion. Their goal was not improvement of the urban environment but maintaining their position of authority.

Mr. Speaker, it was Sir William Henry Beveridge who said:

The object of government in peace and war is not the glory of rulers or of races, but the happiness of the common man.

It is critical to relate questions of urban affairs not to statistics about housing starts but to the extent to which we foster communities in Canada. Being community minded in urban planning is not a folksy experiment; it is the encouragement of an environment that makes possible and in fact promotes individual growth.

● (1242)

I wish to speak for just a moment on how real this is to me as the representative of the constituency of Ottawa-Carleton, because Ottawa-Carleton is basically a necklace of neighbourhoods to the south and to the east of this great city. One thing I have discovered, not only in walking the streets of Ottawa-Carleton but also in meeting every Wednesday night with community associations, is that people are genuinely, honestly concerned with the environment in which they live. They do not wish to make a final decision—that is left to the elected people—but they do want to have input. They do care about the use of public buildings within their communities. They do care about where roads go. They do care about clean air, sewage, water, garbage—about all of these things, because it does affect not only the assets they own but also their neighbours and the quality of life they have.

A community is so much a way of life; it is not merely houses, stores and streets. Its people enjoy feelings of security, pride, self-respect and hope. It may have different interests: spiritual, cultural, political, business, industrial, educational and social. It may have a number of problems such as shabby housing, inadequate street lighting, overcrowded schools and hospitals, and low health standards. However, the good com-

munity is correcting these things through redevelopment, conservation, industrial expansion, rising standards of living, promoting racial harmony and ever-widening ideals of what that may be. It takes the wants and aspirations of its people and writes them into terms of action.

The quiet, stable pattern of the small community in Canada has been disrupted and people are discontented with the emptiness of life aboard commuter trains and buses and in crowded buildings. An example which I would like to put on the record concerns an event which happened last year during the by-election. I was standing in a shopping centre when an elderly couple came by, and they asked for one of my political buttons. When I went to pin it on, the old gentleman said, "Would you mind pinning it in the middle of my back?" I was a little dismayed but I pinned it in the middle of his windbreaker. Then he said, "Would you do the same for my wife?" The lady turned around and I pinned the button in the middle of her back. They then said, "Now we can be travelling billboards for you" and I said, "Really, what do you mean?" The gentleman answered, "You see that old age home up on the hill? We live there. We come down here to the shopping centre every day and walk up and down 24 times. In that way, you see, we can touch people. It is very lonely living in only one room in a senior citizen home." Although we can provide decent homes for older people, it still remains that people have to touch people. Therefore, the quality of our communities are very vital and very important.

When an urban development is allowed and encouraged to become a community, the commuter leaves the anonymity of the city and becomes a person intimately associated with his neighbours and keenly aware of his dignity and his worth. Imagine working downtown in a large Canadian city. How often are you likely to get home for lunch? If you work downtown in a large city, it is almost impossible and most of the time you do not even try. I drive to work here at the House of Commons every day, and my heart is often very heavy when I look across at Place Portage. It is not that I dispute the fact that public servants should live and work in the great city of Hull, but how can we—when we have such wonderful neighbourhoods in Ottawa-Carleton—place 25,000 public servants in a ghetto like that?

Why could we not have taken those buildings and placed them in our nice communities, such as Lucerne, Gatineau or out in Kanata—the kinds of places where public servants could live and work near their centre. We must think more about these matters, rather than just placing people in a group of buildings like that, far away from their families and unable to go home for lunch.

Another incredible problem we have concerns cars; the multitude of cars and buses in our core areas. Not only do we shape our cities, they shape us. One of the greatest cities in the world is London, England. I once asked an urban planner why London was still a city where people wished to live. He said that the secret about London is its 1,000 years of history and the fact that it has always had the boroughs' system, where people could live in a community. Then he said a very interest-