

Urban Affairs

responding to the urban challenge which confronts us. Mr. Speaker, we need this kind of capability and we need it now.

During the balance of the seventies and through the eighties we can foresee a continued high rate of urban growth stemming from a high rate of family formation and continuing movement of people to our larger towns, cities and metropolitan areas. Between 1970-1975 the average number of marriages in Canada will run at 205,000 annually. Between 1975-1980 the marriage figure will jump to 234,000 annually. Net family formation in the late sixties amounted to 110,000 annually. The projected number between 1970-1975 is 118,000 annually. And between 1975-1980 it will be 133,000 annually.

The decisions taken, and innovations adopted, over the next few years will largely determine the shape of urban Canada through the turn of the century. In fact, between now and the year 2000 we could add as many as 12 million people to Canadian cities. This means six cities the size of Toronto, although I fervently hope we can prevent that kind of concentration from taking place, and that we will have a better division of population across the country.

Canada, of course, is not unique in this. We are somewhat unique, however, in that we can look upon this not so much as a frightening prospect as a great opportunity. Unlike so many parts of this world, we really do have the opportunity to shape our urban future and to create communities, new and old, that are human and livable and for people. We have an excellent foundation on which to build; none of our present cities have passed the point of manageability. And we have the technology, skills and imagination.

What we need are ways and means to release this imagination and skill and to focus it on solving our urban problems, on creating environments of all kinds in which people will want to live. In order to do this, we will have to support small communities and medium sized communities as well as large communities. And we will have to develop new communities to check sprawl and concentration and to support resource development.

When we talk about new communities, we have provided Canadian municipalities and provinces with legislation to permit the establishment of new towns and cities. There have been two significant moves in this direction; the Pickering airport land holds promise in this regard as does the southeast city acquisition where we will, I hope sooner rather than later, have two new cities developing that will show the way to all of Canada what can be done when you plan development. Members on both sides of the House should, when they have the opportunity, visit one or two of the new cities in the United States or in the United Kingdom to see just what planning from the beginning does for the living conditions of people.

In Reston, just outside Washington, they have provided 45 per cent green space with traffic isolated walkways and bikeways. There is a mixture of housing ranging from low-income to executive housing. Recreational facilities are spread throughout, accessible without traversing traffic lanes. The total approach to planning accentuates and improves living conditions for the inhabitants without it costing them any more. Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of contribution and innovation that our program can offer

[Mr. Watson.]

yet this motion of non-confidence turns thumbs down on it. The program is one of the most progressive things to happen around here in a long time. It is a sad commentary on the official opposition when they take this attitude.

The Canadian urban demonstration program and fund is a direct response to the urban goals advanced by the government in the recent Throne Speech. As set out in the Throne Speech the federal government's urban goals call for a more balanced pattern of cities and towns throughout Canada, with increased emphasis on federal policies and programs to improve small and medium sized communities and to create new communities. They call for action to improve the physical and social environments of the larger urban centres, particularly the core area or inner city.

I might add that these goals were discussed with the provinces and municipalities at the second national tri-level conference in Edmonton last October and found widespread endorsement and support. The Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Basford) discussed a number of matters at that conference. One of the most important had to do with new cities and the land banking programs that would make such new cities possible. The whole question of promoting land assembly and land banking has repeatedly been raised by the minister. He has been promoting government intervention in land markets for more than a year.

● (1730)

In January, 1973, the minister assured provincial governments that we would make available to them at least \$100 million a year for the next five years to finance land assembly programs. The provincial governments were somewhat slow in responding. However, by the end of 1973 we were able to commit, not \$100 million but \$150 million for that purpose. We have been keeping our side of the bargain. At the same time that we are stepping up land assembly we are applying guidelines to give priority to those assemblies which promise to create housing quickly and make provision for low and modest income housing in return for profits to the community for the formation of parks, community facilities, day-care centres and the like.

One of the strange things about the criticism from the official opposition on the subject of land banking and land assembly is that the government should not be in the business of making a profit on land. This is totally nonsensical. It shows the bankruptcy of their total thinking on the urban problems of Canada. This so-called profit which the official opposition finds appalling is not profit. It is money which will be used to provide services for the people living in those communities and as a means of lowering the taxes they have to pay. Is that wrong? The official opposition is on record time and again as finding land banking unsatisfactory because of this element of so-called government profiteering.

The present shortage of serviced land and the increase in demand for housing is without doubt providing a field day for speculators who are enjoying windfall profits without ever moving a brick, digging a hole or putting a pipe in the ground. There is no doubt in my mind that we need to review the whole question of how to deal with these windfall profits. Runaway speculation has occurred