

National Housing Act

still being a source of income for the municipalities. Finally, the families would feel more at home and could enjoy a sound affluence and freedom which would allow them to better provide for the maintenance and education of their children.

Mr. Chairman, our construction policy, with the assistance of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, enables people to acquire their own home, but they have to pay five times the cost price.

In an intelligent financial system, the credits of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation would be made available to borrowers without interest and the instalments to repay the loan would be kept in line with the depreciation of the property, namely the buildings. If a house is good to last 20 years, according to the figures and the standards of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, repayment could be made over a 20 year basis and then a property would have been paid only once and not five times in financing costs. Nowadays, many home owners must pay for a lifetime, as is the case with the "Habitations Jeanne-Mance". They must pay for their home and after 50 years, they will not even own a house. They are paying because our financial system is not consistent with progress and with the abundance of wealth in the country. They have to pay the equivalent of five properties and after 50 years, they do not even own a home. That is why we, the Creditistes, do not claim that we will give a house to everybody, but we want to set up a financial system to enable every family to buy a house and to pay for it without making every family pay for five houses in financing costs while remaining tenants.

The Chairman: I regret to interrupt the hon. Member, but his time has expired.

• (8:10 p.m.)

[Text]

Mr. Macdonald: Mr. Chairman, I should not like the occasion of the discussion of this legislation to pass without taking the opportunity to address a few words to the House on the question of urban renewal, and more particularly that aspect of it which provides for subsidized public housing for people of low incomes. This is of particular importance to me because I think there is probably no other constituency in the country with such a high concentration of urban renewal developments of this kind, and which also in the downtown part of it provides such a great challenge from the standpoint of urban renewal.

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Members of the House who have taken some cognizance of the Toronto newspapers in recent days cannot have escaped noticing the attention that has been paid to the difficulties that have arisen in the St. James Town area and more particularly the plight of the unfortunate people in that area who will be ousted from the very substandard housing which is being replaced by apartment developments. The problem of bad housing on St. James and Ontario Streets and on Darling and Rose Avenues has not been solved and will not be solved merely by leveling the existing buildings in the way that many have already been levelled and replacing them with shiny new apartments. The problem really has only been shifted to another locale somewhere else in the downtown area where the St. James Town residents because of limited means, will have to move to find shelter—and very inadequate shelter at that.

Here, Mr. Chairman, I would make it very clear that I am not expressing any criticism of Mr. Bradley or the Toronto Housing Corporation, who I know have been doing their very best to find shelter for these people. Rather, the difficulties of the present administration in Toronto have been created because their hands are tied, because there is not a sufficient stock of adequate housing in the city for people of limited incomes to which the St. James Town residents can be moved.

The root of the problem is an economic one in that the incomes of these families are simply not adequate to meet the expenses involved in living in the centre of the city, expenses which are contributed to a very great extent by the high level of rents in downtown accommodation. Inadequate housing is a cancer in the very heart of a large modern city, a cancer that will just not go away by wishing it would or by turning one's back on it. Like a cancer it spreads and will kill neighbouring areas in increasingly large numbers unless dramatic action is taken to stop it.

The St. James Town situation which has occurred in my riding is not an isolated one in my city. It is not of recent origin and it is not the responsibility of only one or two slum operators. In fact, these people are really only ghouls who are feeding on the dying neighbourhood, but they are not solely responsible for having killed the neighbourhood. Rather it has been the indifference and the shortsightedness of the community as a