

Housing

will tell you what he advised. He said, "Remove the ceiling on NHA mortgages". So we did. That is what happens when the Liberal government takes the advice of a Conservative. Then, around 1969 Mr. Hellyer advised that we introduce five-year roll-over mortgages. That would put more money into housing. Now, where is that man today? He is usually up there in the gallery, but they just sold out *The Toronto Sun* to MacLean-Hunter, so he is probably down in Bermuda clipping coupons. I do not know where he is today, but I do not think that advice helped us at all. I do not think that advice helped the housing industry one whit.

In 1973 the Liberals and the Conservatives encouraged high-priced housing by unrestricted interest rates. All that did was to allow the developers and lenders to put their money into high volume projects where they could make the most money. In 1974 the Liberals introduced the AHOP program which has become a disaster for many people. I am quite certain that when Barney Danson, who is no longer with us, introduced it, he did not intend that at all. His intention was that if you start out with a low mortgage, after a few years the breadwinners' incomes rose and they could perhaps pay the higher interest rates. But what happened? Because of this, government mortgage rates outstripped incomes and so people were stuck with them. They abandoned them right, left and centre, and in many cases, such as in Oshawa and Brantford, ended up selling them to speculators. As if that were not enough, in 1979 CMHC withdrew from direct lending. Gradually, over the years, there has been a withdrawal of CMHC from an active role in the housing market to becoming observers and guarantors for the mortgage companies. That is their role today, and it is not satisfactory because it does not solve the problems we face.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a few more gimmicks. We have the mortgage interest deferral, and what does that mean? It means that after five years of deferred mortgage interest rates you end up owing the lending institution more money than you did five years previously. Then we have the other little thing imported from the United States, and I will speak about it a little more later; the variable rate mortgage. A no-limit mortgage is really wonderful. That sort of thing gives a great deal of stability to our country—that is nonsense.

● (2100)

We have a minister over there who is laughing about all of this while many people are crying because they are seriously concerned about losing their homes, their prospects and their dreams. I do not think the minister should laugh about peoples' problems. I think he should cry in shame as well. I do not think he feels comfortable about it, though. I am not suggesting for one minute that the minister feels great about this. He probably feels very frustrated, like many people do.

What is the current situation? The current situation is that most people in this country think that an affordable home is a constitutional right. We have heard stories in this debate about property rights.

Mr. MacBain: Not from us.

Mr. Rose: We have heard that people should enjoy in the Constitution, federally, despite what the provinces might say, the right to own property. I can understand that, notwithstanding the fact that I think the enshrinement of property rights federally is an intrusion on provincial rights. I think that we can understand the peoples' desire for property rights. The fathers, mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers of people sitting right here in this room came to this land from Europe and Asia for a dream, for land they could own, land that was there, because they did not have it where they came from. Therefore, they could be owners of property. They could have their own homes and farms. I think perhaps the right to shelter, like the right to health, like the right to medicare and like the right to legal services, should have been enshrined in the Constitution as a constitutional right, because what is happening right now is that more and more people, not fewer and fewer, are becoming tenants on their own land. The number of tenants is rising and the number of owners is declining. Why is that? Is that because of the wicked socialists? No. It is because of the rapacious interest of the mortgage companies, banks and private developers.

I just heard the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands say, "That was not me, I did not do that."

Miss MacDonald: I did not say that. I said it was great up here for you to be an audience.

Mr. Rose: I think it is terrific that you are an audience, and I am really pleased that you are interested.

Miss MacDonald: Thank you.

Mr. Rose: In British Columbia, where I come from, the average family earns about \$30,000 a year. The average house price over in the Vancouver area, anyway, although I believe it is cheaper up the valley in suburbia, where I come from, was about \$140,000 last year.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Rose: If one spent 30 per cent of one's income, with a 16 per cent mortgage, and that is a low one, one could probably qualify for a \$50,000 house, except that there is just one snag in that whole scenario—there is no \$50,000 house. One needs an income of \$80,000 to \$90,000 to purchase a house. So what has happened to that dream of home purchasing? It has gone. It is out the window. No young person can acquire a home unless he has a mother or father who helps him.

Mr. Deans: The Liberals are destroying them.

Mr. Rose: Home ownership is being destroyed.

Mr. Deans: By whom?

Mr. Rose: The minister might say that the private housing market will fix it up. The private housing market cannot fix it up. It is impossible for it to do that. What will happen in future? We have a zero vacancy rate for rental units in Vancouver and that area. Yet, houses are sitting vacant, unsold,