

Let me deal for a moment with the history of this type of thing. I want to make three points. Only 6 per cent of the wage earners in Toronto can today own a home. The heading of this article suggests that housing in Toronto is a major social tragedy. I suggest it is a social tragedy everywhere. Rents are going up for the old and for the students. I refer to an article which appeared in the *Globe and Mail* of January 29. It reads in part:

Munish Gajadhar moved into a one-bedroom apartment at 230 Oak Street on January 1.

His rent in the morning was \$137, and by suppertime it was \$152. If that is not galloping inflation, then I have never seen a galloping horse outside the city of Calgary. Let me say a few more words about this great, national agency. I know of a case where a man signed a mortgage on a house in April, 1966, for \$12,350. He was a Calgary resident. An action was started in January of this year by a member of a firm appointed as a result of all the compassion this Liberal government can muster. I am sure of that because one of the members of that firm ran against me as a Grit during one election.

This man was three mortgage payments behind; \$118 for October, \$118 for November and \$122 for January—a total of \$358. He was out of work, but even so an action for foreclosure was started. He obtained an order from the court, and after consulting certain people he was able to sell the house, as a result of inflation, for \$21,000. When he went to pay CMHC his arrears, although they were only \$358, the partisan solicitor charged him \$579.50. That is the type of thing done by this government which has great feeling for the people! That is quite a collection fee on such a small foreclosure. Of course, the CMHC representative suggests there are only 2,600 foreclosures today in Canada.

I remember when the former leader of the NDP was Premier of Saskatchewan. He has talked about foreclosures in the 1930s. Never was there a corporation in Canada so heartless as the CMHC—and it is under the control of the minister responsible for housing. Let me say to the hon. member on the other side who wants remedies but will not take the medicine when you give it to him, it is time the CMHC ceased to be an independent body and was made directly responsible to the minister, in order that he might control the fate of Canadians living in urban centres.

An hon. Member: You can't blame them for patronage appointments in that regard.

Mr. Woolliams: That is another thing I do not want to get into at this time; it would take too long. This government has appointed so many Grits to so many boards lately that it has run short of jobs for them.

Only the rich can buy a house in Canada. Those in the middle and low-income groups are forced to live in public housing which will be our future ghettos. Those who oppose this party when its members move motions are now bleating like sheep because they know this government is bankrupt of ideas. They know this government has driven the middle-class and the poor people from their homes into public housing, at high rents. I think Pitt was right when he said that when votes cease to be important, they will cease to be bought. That is what is happening to

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the Liberal party right now. Members of that party are becoming nervous and jittery.

An hon. Member: Oh, come on.

Mr. Wolliams: Then go to the people and see what happens. Our problem is one of over-all inflation rather than simply rising food costs. We must consider the whole ball of wax, the entire field of inflation. We must make decisions in these terms, rather than continue to bleat like sheep about food prices only. The increase in food prices will continue as long as we have inflation and Liberalism in this country.

Last night in the U.S. news and world report several top economists of the United States, Britain, and I believe one from France—I do not try to hide the fact that other countries are experiencing inflation, but at least they are doing something about it—said that if inflation continues we will have a greater recession in this country than we had in the 1930s. This kind of economic condition spells distress, unrest and war—and, God knows, even in my lifetime we have had enough of that. Surely the time is past due for the Liberals to start moving. If they want to hold power, let them hold it with responsibility and start governing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Woolliams: What should this government be doing in addition to what I suggested about CMHC? It should act within the authority and power of the constitution and not hide behind it. As the hon. member for Don Valley and the hon. member for St. John's East have said, we should immediately impose a temporary freeze on prices in order that we can initiate discussions at all levels with the groups I mentioned in my opening remarks. While the freeze is on, quick action should be taken to consult the provinces, industry and labour. This is not a selfish race against time but is a step one that must be understood for the economic good of the whole country rather than for any special group with special privileges.

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We should repeal immediately the 11 per cent sales tax on building materials so that at least those people I have spoken about will be able to afford new homes. We should produce a new national housing program, making grants to the municipalities to clear away the bureaucratic deadwood and deadlock which exist at all levels of government, and guarantee the little people that the interest rates which they pay on their CMHC mortgages will be no greater than 1 per cent over the prime rate. I am not talking about private lending institutions; I am talking about where the lending is through a government entity. In that case it should never be greater than 1 per cent over the prime rate. I understand that at the present time—if it has not risen today—the prime rate is 6½ per cent. So the rate on CMHC mortgages should not be more than 7½ per cent.

We are not competing for public money with industry, because this government has the ability to gather in millions, indeed billions of dollars through taxation by hitting the middle-class and lower income people of this country. I spoke to the parliamentary secretary to the minister