



Bulletin

Vol. 25, No. 16

April 22, 1970

HOUSING IN THE SIXTIES

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation recently released its annual report for 1969, which contains the following highlights:

In looking back at the Sixties the most striking feature, so far as housing is concerned, is the paradox of a significant improvement in overall housing conditions accompanied by a growing public concern with the housing situation.

In excess of 1.5 million dwellings, or more than one-quarter of the present housing stock, were built during this period. The activity, much of it taking the form of rental dwellings, accommodated not only the increase in the number of families and the large increase in non-family households which took place, but also permitted a reduction in the number of crowded households. It also made possible, through replacements, a reduction in the number of obsolete dwellings. At the same time there was, through improvements and modernization, a significant upgrading of the quality of existing dwellings.

This improvement in housing conditions was

real, however prosaic the indicators by which it has to be measured. In terms of the quality of the housing inventory, it is reasonably certain that the next census will show there has been a significant decline in the number of dwellings judged to be in need of major repair, from 254,000 units at the beginning of the decade to probably fewer than 150,000 dwellings now. Certainly the number of dwellings lacking modern plumbing facilities such as bath or shower, now regarded as standard equipment, declined by close to 50 per cent in less than a decade from 891,000 to 442,000 dwellings. And, overlapping with these figures, the number of dwellings without flush toilets declined from 670,000 to 324,000.

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Despite these improvements, housing became one of the major subjects of public concern and debate during the second half of the Sixties in a way that had not been matched since the immediate postwar years of the late Forties. The immediate cause of this was the cutback in new housing production which began in the second half of 1965 and continued over the next 18 months, coinciding with the highest level of immigration experienced since the late Fifties.

Marked declines in vacancy rates and marked increases in rents and prices were the immediate consequences of the decline in new housing production with the initial effects being felt most acutely by those whose housing expectations were most abruptly affected. Perhaps even more important in contributing to the concern about housing, although less immediately apparent, were rising expectations about living standards which were not to be easily reconciled with a slowing-down in the actual rate of progress.

While these concerns must temper any assessment of the Sixties they should not inhibit recognition of some significant developments of the decade which are going to influence progress in dealing with housing throughout the Seventies.

CONTENTS

Housing in the Sixties	1
Miss Gelber on UN Commission	2
Molson Prizes, 1970	2
Seeking an End to Race Hate	3
Standards Council for Canada	3
Conference Bid for Shrimp Fishery.....	4
Canadian Missions Merge	4
Strikes in February	4
Port of Vancouver Greatly Extended	5
Mr. Eban to Visit.....	6
World Meteorological Day	6
Farmers Back to School	6