

as other spending priorities permit, establishing a program of loans to municipalities for the development of effective urban transit systems.

It appears that the hon. member for Trinity discovered what all Canadians are slowly discovering, that this administration is not concerned and is insensitive to the problems of our urban population.

Mr. Baldwin: They have no compassion.

Mr. Alexander: Did I hear someone use the word "compassion"? This government has no compassion; it is complacent and indifferent. Yet it is in the great cities that its members got their votes. They have talked about Trudeaumania but let me tell them that even if they have 151 seats we have three and a half more years to go and things are starting to look tough over there already.

An hon. Member: Come on over, Linc.

Mr. Alexander: Don't worry, I will never go over there because the price is not right, nor do I need the formal friendship. On an informal basis we can always get together.

Where will Canada get the direction it needs? The answer to that question is that it will have to come from this side under the leadership of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), who has continually requested the government to accept responsibility regarding the priorities required by the people of Canada.

I was not here when the motion concerning air and water pollution was debated. The fact is that the government has also failed in this field. Since the house has received a full account of the policy sins of the government in that regard as recently as Monday last I will not go into that sorry tale in any depth today.

What I have been trying to do is to outline some areas of federal responsibility which have a real impact on the quality of urban living and in respect of which the federal government has blatantly refused to exercise its responsibility. This list could be extended, but of course other hon. members want to take part in this debate and may mention more.

The federal government has become more involved in programs related to human resources. Manpower retraining, unemployment insurance and assistance to the needy are programs which are basically urban oriented. They are attempts to help people cope with and adapt to the real and crippling

Alleged Failure to Cope With Urban Growth problems which face the disadvantaged in our cities.

My main point, and I want to re-emphasize this, is that the federal government is very deeply involved in the cities. The fate of millions of Canadians is in its hands. The government cannot refer its problems to the constitutional limbo, the constitutional strait-jacket, the constitutional smokescreen. It cannot cover up its failure to meet its responsibilities to provide effective leadership.

The chorus of demands is rising and becoming more blatant. In case the Prime Minister and his accomplices have just not got around to reading the report of the Task Force on Housing and Urban Development, perhaps I should read a few examples of the type of action requested by the little people of this country. For instance:

The federal government, in co-operation with a provincial government, should seriously consider the construction of a "new city" as a pilot project where proposed urban solutions should be tested in an actual environment.

I hope the minister heard that and is considering the construction of a new city as a pilot project where these proposed urban solutions could be tested in an actual environment.

The task force also recommended that the federal government "should give early priority to the creation of a central information bank to collect, organize and disseminate available data on the subject to other governments, agencies and Canadians generally."

This report has been gathering dust while Canadians suffer. Somehow we must prick the conscience of the ministers of the government and of the Prime Minister especially. It is so easy to miss and not to see the problems and the deterioration of our cities. We could learn from the experience of the United States. I just want to touch on two points.

As a result of neglect and unconcern, as a result of the attitude that things will get better on the part of governments to the south, we have witnessed an eruption in that country the like of which we have never seen before. This is because some people there did not learn a lesson. We have to be concerned and we have to learn from experiences that are continually brought to our eyes and ears as a result of the United States social revolution. Surely we cannot be this close and not learn the lesson. Surely we cannot be this close and not realize that somebody over there is trying to tell us something. Why will the Prime Minister not take real action to