

Senator REID: Would there be any restrictions, then, on districts which have a population of less than 55,000?

Mr. BATES: No.

Senator REID: There are no restrictions at all?

Mr. BATES: No, you could build anywhere, even in Aklavik.

Senator REID: What is the reason for an amortization period of 50 years when the federal Government and a provincial Government join hands in a housing project while at the same time an amortization period of 25 years is the limit with respect to individual homes?

Mr. BATES: Usually in the case of federal-provincial arrangements you get into a fairly expensive type of buildings. For example, there is Regent Park.

Senator QUINN: I suppose this category would include apartment houses?

Mr. BATES: Yes. This type of housing is fairly expensive and is built to last a long time, say 80 years, so that you are able to have a longer amortization period. This helps to get the rent down.

Senator REID: I understand. That explains it. On page 10 of your brief you speak of federal-provincial housing projects initiated by municipalities. Have many municipalities applied for this?

Mr. BATES: For real projects?

Senator REID: Yes.

Mr. BATES: Yes, I understand that applications have been made by Toronto, Montreal, St. John's, Newfoundland, Saint John, New Brunswick, Vancouver, and I believe one has just been passed by the City Council in Halifax. I understand there are about 50 municipalities in all, including Hamilton, Windsor, and small towns like Goderich, Owen Sound, Smiths Falls and similar municipalities in Ontario. In all there are about 50 or 51.

Senator REID: It seems to me that a new principle is introduced on page 11 of your statement. Perhaps the question I wish to ask will not be considered a fair one to ask you now but on page 11 you refer to the Minister of Public Works. You say that he may enter into agreements with municipalities to assist in the clearance, re-planning, rehabilitation and modernization of blighted and substandard areas. So far as I know this is the first time direct agreements have been entered into between municipalities and the federal Government for this kind of work. Probably I should not ask the question when the Minister of Public Works is referred to, but at the same time it seems to be a principle which was not in existence before.

Mr. BATES: I think, Senator, it is merely a textual difficulty. The agreement requires, first of all, that the Government of the province in which the area is situated should have approved the classification and clearance thereto by the municipality. In other words, we still require provincial approval.

Senator REID: I am glad I asked that question.

Mr. BATES: Yes, because it is not explicit enough in the brief.

Senator REID: My last question has to do with septic tanks. I am not one who advocates the construction of septic tanks but we have some peculiar circumstances out in the West in some of our municipalities, and I suppose this is true of elsewhere in Canada. I know there are districts in Vancouver which are 50 years old where septic tanks are still used. I know in my own district approval has been given for a large project where all the sewage is to be taken to one tank. It is just a cesspool, and I expect that 50 years will pass before a sewer ever goes through that district because it is just that far away from the sea. I am thinking that some consideration should be given to letting people build septic tanks under certain conditions. The home in which I am living has a septic tank and we have not had any trouble with it in 40 years.