

National Housing Act

At the same time, by requiring purchasers of expensive housing to make bigger down payments we are cooling out demand in the high-priced ranges and increasing the supply of capital for the kind of housing we need in this country. This will cool out the existing housing market, but that is not so bad. If we have a home which we want to sell—and perhaps we will get less for it next year; I hope that is the case,—because we want to move somewhere else, we will be able to buy less expensively because, as one hon. member said, some prices have risen unconscionably and we intend to cool that market out. These are speculative gains. We have said this is the type of housing people are living on, rather than living in. It became one of the hedges against inflation and I think that situation will be reversed, not dramatically and not immediately but we will see a gradual cooling off. Indeed, in many places that has started to occur.

To wind up these brief remarks, I appreciate the contributions which have been made in this debate by hon. members on all sides of the House. I think all those who have spoken have helped in some way to illuminate the real challenges which we face in ensuring that all Canadians, not just most Canadians, are well housed. I commend the principles of this legislation to the serious consideration of all hon. members and I look forward to a more detailed consideration of its provisions at the committee stage. Indeed, I am prepared to sit morning, noon and night seven days a week, if necessary, in the hope that all manner of questions will be addressed to me and properly answered, and the legislation thoroughly dealt with so that we can give it third reading before we recess for the Christmas holidays.

● (1420)

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I do not want the minister to leave the House under the apprehension of his statement as to my position with respect to Lebreton Flats and southeast city. I put my position quite clearly and I think it is important that he understand that. I regard those decisions on the part of the government, in terms of their priorities for the national capital area, as stupid and I think I should tell him so.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. What the hon. member just said proves he has no question of privilege. He is just making an argument which should be made at another time.

[Translation]

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.

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REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES ACT

AMENDMENT TO EXTEND CERTAIN PROVISIONS TO DECEMBER 31, 1981

Hon. Jean Chrétien (for the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion) moved that Bill C-74 intituled "An Act to amend the Regional Development Incentive Act", as

[Mr. Danson.]

reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Regional Economic Expansion, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Chrétien (for Mr. Lessard) moved that Bill C-74 be read the third time and do pass.

[English]

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, I am thinking of the Friday afternoon syndrome when occasionally bills whose application is rather simple, or they are short bills, tend to slip along for discussion without notice.

I am not going to detain the House for any great length of time, but I think we should remind ourselves that when the Department of Regional Economic Expansion was set up with what might be called a flourish of trumpets and press releases, the expectation of people, particularly in the Atlantic provinces, was at a high level indeed. Like so many undertakings of succeeding governments in Canada, the purpose has not in every case fulfilled this expectation. I am therefore sorry to say there is a fair amount of cynicism about the purpose of the department, in my part of Canada at least.

Some years ago it was the "in" thing to say that all the problems of the department would be solved if there could be decentralization. I am sorry to say that despite the most excellent people who have been decentralized to places like Moncton, it seems to me that the criticism could be made that it just adds one more layer to the long and difficult decision-making process. Instead of expediting the decisions of this department, I think it is reasonable to say that in many cases another layer of bureaucracy has interrupted the flow of information and decision-making between the federal government and the provincial governments. This is not a harsh criticism. It is, though, a comment on the fact that often the best plans, made with the best will in the world, do not work out in the best interests of the program.

I have two constituency concerns, Mr. Speaker. These general agreements signed by the federal department and the provinces often overlook the more modest proposals that towns and villages make to improve their facilities. I know that in some cases the onus is on the provinces to give the federal government a catalogue of those things for which they expect assistance in funding. There is a particular case with regard to the Fundy national park in the constituency of Fundy-Royal which is the satellite service village in the national parks' system. Very great strains are placed on that municipality as far as water and sewage are concerned. I hope that the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard) will not only take note of this service village, but that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Buchanan) will do so as well.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I wish to discuss for a moment the problems that arose as a result of a question I put yesterday having to do with the New Brunswick Multiplex which I termed a joint federal-provincial industrial expeditor. It is a rather imaginative concept and has joint funding. Its board of directors has on it public officials from both the provincial and federal governments. In reply to my question, the minister said that the experiment had been highly successful, but after he got through praising