

*Housing Prices*

house in the suburbs, let him make a small down payment and assume a mortgage of \$18,000 or \$20,000"? Why does the government, or Central Mortgage and Housing not stand behind the person who wants to remodel and modernize his home? That man's house may still be sound. Why can he not borrow, say, \$6,000, probably all that is required, and modernize the home in which he is living in the downtown area?

• (1550)

Why does the government not do that? There is no indication in anything the minister has said to indicate that they propose to do it. It would be possible to borrow \$5,000 or \$6,000 at a reasonable rate of interest if there were some kind of free grant program for families with a low income. Then we would not see the bulldozing and destruction of some of the finest homes in the cities of Canada.

About a year and a half ago I had an opportunity to attend a parliamentary conference in Holland. I was impressed by the housing in the city of Amsterdam. Houses which are several hundred years old are still being lived in; they are being remodelled, refurbished and very adequately meet the needs of the people. The government of this country has the view, and CMHC agrees, that if a house is 35 years old the best thing to do is bring in a bulldozer and demolish it. I completely reject that kind of approach.

I urge the minister and the government to pay attention to the very moderate recommendations in the Charney report so that the central parts of our cities will not be gutted and replaced by high-rise apartments. They are very expensive to rent and are really only adequate for single persons or young, married couples: they do not provide sufficient space or facilities for family life.

There is one more point I wish to deal with in the few moments remaining at my disposal. This government has adopted a principle which is not only impractical but immoral. I refer to the principle they have fostered that every person in Canada should own his own house. The fact is that the majority of people in Canada cannot afford to own their own homes, regardless of which government is in office and what it does to make it attractive to buy your own home.

The majority of people in Canada have an income of less than \$6,000 a year. There is no way they can afford to buy their own homes. Therefore, we ought to be seriously thinking about policies which encourage rental housing. I am not talking about apartments in every city of Canada where a one-bedroom apartment rents for \$225 a month and a two-bedroom apartment for between \$275 and \$300. That may be adequate for a businessman, and a Member of Parliament may be able to afford it. But those earning \$5,000, \$6,000 or \$7,000 a year certainly cannot afford to pay that kind of rent.

When you consider that the average family moves between five and seven times in a lifetime, it is idiotic not to have a national policy to encourage rental accommodation. Our encouragement of individual home ownership has made people who rent accommodation second-class citizens. We have no effective policy for rental housing,

[Mr. Orlikow.]

not just for those with low incomes but for those with moderate incomes who badly need housing.

The only program which this government has proposed for people with moderate incomes is the program of rental housing under section 15 of the act, namely, limited dividend housing. That program is a complete failure. There are not enough units, the standards are poor, the community facilities are badly located, there are little or no on-site facilities, the on-site planning is atrocious and the rents being charged are exorbitant. The only people who benefit are the builders.

**An hon. Member:** What city are you talking about?

**Mr. Orlikow:** I am talking about Winnipeg, Toronto, Vancouver or any other city. I invite the minister to come with me and the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) to look at the limited dividend housing projects that have been built in the St. Boniface constituency. They are a disgrace.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Where is Joe?

**Mr. Orlikow:** The builders are making a fortune out of these projects. CMHC has no real policy of policing site planning, the design and building standards of limited dividend housing. While designed for moderate income families, this program is so disastrous that it is a bad influence on public housing. People confuse what they see in limited dividend housing projects with low-income housing. Let us do something for people with moderate incomes.

**Mr. Mahoney:** Vote Liberal.

**Mr. Orlikow:** The minister says "Vote Liberal". I think people have a good deal more sense, now they have seen what the Liberal government has done.

**Mr. Mahoney:** It was just a suggestion.

**Mr. Orlikow:** I advise this government to step up a program to encourage public housing. In the past 2½ years the government of my province, with the co-operation and financial assistance of the federal government, has built 8,000 public housing units, half of them for senior citizens. It is now possible for an old age pensioner with only his old age pension to get a bachelor apartment in a modern apartment building for as low as \$32.50 a month. This is what can be done when governments get into the field of public housing.

**Mr. David Weatherhead (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Urban Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I would first like to answer one or two of the comments made by the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert) earlier in the debate. As a lawyer who used to do considerable work in the real estate field, I know from experience how important is the question of warranties that the member raised. He mentioned particular problems in Ontario, Sudbury and Deep River.

I asked the officials of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to check into these problems and see if we could get an answer before the debate closed today. I have been informed by them that in Sudbury, where the prob-