

Supply

do not know how Canadians would vote as between the lowest 10 per cent and the lowest 20 per cent. I do know that Canadians would prefer to see the poorest in society receive more and the richest receive nothing, or less. That is the Conservative philosophy. I think it is something with which all members of our caucus feel comfortable. I think it is something with which most Canadians feel comfortable. It is not something with which the Liberal Party of Canada feels comfortable. It is not something with which the New Democratic Party feels comfortable. I think that is their basic objection to what the Minister is doing in terms of the Canadian housing policy.

What the Minister has done is to set up a formula which ensures that the money will go to those who need it the most and that it will be community-specific, based on community income for an individual, the standard in the community. It will be based on the costs in the community. When the Hon. Member stood up and told us that the previous pattern delivered 40 per cent of the money to people who needed it and 60 per cent to those who did not, then he was talking about the Liberal approach. Our philosophy is that 100 per cent of the money should go to those who need it. That is what the Minister is intending to devise. I believe the taxpayers will be better served by that type of mechanism.

In the time remaining I would like to review the process briefly. What the Minister has done is what many of our Ministers have done. It is different from the Liberal approach. A change in public policy has been proceeded with as a result of discussion and consultation in which both sides talk and both sides listen. Out of that process have come proposals that enable the federal Government to enter into a partnership with others in society, in this case with the provinces, to target assistance to those who need it the most. What that produces is more housing for more people. With respect to the program under discussion today, there will be twice as many households helped with the same expenditure of dollars as under the former program. Those who will receive the help clearly need it the most. None of the money will go to those who do not need it. It is a pleasure to stand up in the House and congratulate the Minister for his foresight and for the development of this program.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Are there questions or comments? The Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy).

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, first, let me say to the Hon. Member that we must appreciate one of the more unique, if not bizarre, dissertations in this House in which the social pathology of Canada has been ascribed to the L-shaped livingroom which was developed in the 1950s. That has the makings of a wonderful doctoral dissertation. However, I am not sure how relative it is to the debate.

Before I ask the Hon. Member a question, I wish to point out one thing. He made a great fuss about how Conservatives recognize that we must help those in need and not the rich. I guess it comes down to the question of how that need is

defined. I simply point out to the Hon. Member that a family of four which lives in my riding and makes \$19,000 is not exactly rich. That is a very ordinary income, and only meets the very barest of essentials. Those are the people about whom I am talking. Those are the ones who have been cut out of the program. There is nothing rich about them. There is nothing upper-income about them. They are very ordinary working people, who want to try to save their houses and their neighbourhoods. The Hon. Member and his Government are stopping them from doing that.

Furthermore, I ask the Hon. Member, who was so congratulatory to his Minister for all the wonderful things he has done, and taking into account the new formula, if he can explain to me one simple thing. Why is it that there has been absolutely no allocation of any money since April for the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program even though we are now close to the beginning of June? Can the Hon. Member tell me why all that time has been allowed to pass without any allocations for RRAP having been made? Not only does that cut out the rich and those with modest incomes, it cuts out everyone up to this point in time.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to respond to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry. I am not the Minister, nor am I an administrator. I suspect his information is incorrect, because it usually is. However, I have no definitive knowledge about whether or not any money has been paid out under RRAP. It is interesting that the Hon. Member did not ask that question of the Minister when he had the opportunity.

Mr. Heap: I can you tell that none has been paid out.

● (1540)

Mr. Hawkes: Returning to L-shaped living and dining rooms, there is a certain amount of predictability to the Hon. Member's behaviour. If one has a rather well thought out explanation of a phenomenon, something that happens to be new to one's mind is rejected without thought. There is the notion that what went on before is best, not through any process of logic, not through any process of evidence, but simply because it went on before and they devised it. I suggest that this is one reason why those Members are sitting on that side rather than this side.

Mr. Axworthy: Have you looked at the polls lately? It won't be long.

Mr. Hawkes: Canadians are common-sense people. They can differentiate between the reality of a situation and the public expression of something that does not accord with that reality. I suggest to the Hon. Member that he think a little longer about what the L-shaped living and dining room did to small Canadian houses and therefore to Canadian families and people. I think he might find some wisdom in the idea if he could just open his ears long enough to hear it and then work extra hard to think about it.