

*National Housing Act*

state, and that we have to deal with provinces which have been pretty darned apathetic over the problem. We have also had to deal with municipalities which are the creatures of those provinces. I realize that our municipal politicians in particular and people in general have always shown a great reluctance to get into the field of housing, and I am aware of the difficulties this creates for a federal minister who is trying to promote a proper housing scheme. But the best way to show the provinces and the municipalities that one really means business would be to give pretty serious consideration to elevating housing to its proper place. This is just as important as national health and welfare, it is just as important as fisheries and it is just as important as forestry.

I think it is about time that we Canadians establish and put into operation a new ministry of housing headed by a full-time minister. In view of the hon. gentlemen's speech at the resolution stage and the attitude he has shown, I think I would be quite happy if he were the minister in charge of this great undertaking. So my first suggestion is that we have a full-time minister of housing.

My second suggestion is that I think the minister should be prepared to take to the road and sell this measure to the provinces and to the municipalities. This is going to be one of the very big problems, to overcome what I described a moment ago as the apathy and indifference of the provinces and the municipalities in this field. I should like to see, for example, a series of provincial-municipal conferences organized by the minister in each province where the provincial governments and the municipalities could be brought together, and their needs examined and in particular specific goals and targets set so that we will have some rule by which to measure the success which is being achieved in this particular field. Again, if this is going to be done, if you are really going to get out, promote the act and overcome the apathy, there will have to be a full-time minister of housing. I do not see how you are going to get around that particular problem otherwise.

Third, I should like to see the minister stir up his own department, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, which at the moment is largely oriented toward private, single family homes and apartments built by private operators. This is not the department's fault. Successive governments have never really encouraged the department to activate itself in some of these other fields. But they are at the moment largely oriented in this direction, and it seems to me that one thing that really could promote the act would be if the minister could get the department all steamed up, and then

C.M.H.C. officials right across the country could really sell the program to the municipal officials and local planners with whom they are in daily contact. This would go a long way toward active promotion of this particular scheme.

Fourth, I think the government should seriously consider sponsoring and financing courses on a university level for housing authorities, housing administrators, welfare authorities and, in short, anybody having anything to do with public housing, especially homes for the aged. If such courses were made available and the details, benefits and necessity of substantial action under this act were made clear, I think these officials would have a lot of information they do not have now. They would be a lot better informed and prepared to recommend schemes to their particular municipalities.

Fifth, I should like to see the minister promote this housing legislation by greater use of press conferences and press coverage. We simply must begin to make Canadians more housing conscious. We are obsessed in Canada with single family ownership and all of the advertising and promotion have been in this direction. Consequently a stigma has grown up against subsidized public housing, and I think the minister has a big job ahead of him if he is going to reorient Canadian thinking on this subject and make people realize that public housing is perfectly respectable, and subsidized housing is economically necessary. If he began such a campaign I think it would be most helpful.

For example, I should like to see a model city built somewhere in Canada so all Canadians could see the wonderful new things that are available in town planning, planning techniques and housing in general. We might even make it a part of our centennial celebrations; but a model city would encourage people to see it, make them realize the importance of housing in our daily lives and would put them a long way on the road to considering this as a major problem.

Sixth, I should like to see the government initiate a crash program for senior citizens, especially single pensioners. I know the minister has been on a cross country tour and has visited many areas. I am sure he has seen, as all of us have, the shameful and disgusting accommodation in which many pensioners live. All of us during election campaigns have had occasion to visit these individuals in their single rooms at the top of houses and have come away—I did at least—ashamed to be a Canadian, in that we were permitting our pensioners to live in such deplorable circumstances. While I realize there are other aspects of great importance, I should still like to see a crash program, for humanitarian