

*Suggested Lack of Urban Policy*

ment a leading role in housing matters. The third is transportation, including air services, harbours, railways and interprovincial roads. The fourth is postal services; the fifth is pollution; the sixth is the arts and the seventh is national parks. Each of these areas provides access for any federal government concerned about the well-being of our city dwellers. Instead of seeing them as opportunities to create an exciting, decent and democratic human environment for the people living in our cities, the Prime Minister has completely abandoned federal responsibilities. Contrary to the public impression, Mr. Speaker, our Prime Minister is not really a man of action in the political field. Rather, he is evasive, cautious and conservative. He is really a Mackenzie King who likes to dance with *Funny Girl*—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**An hon. Member:** That was good.

**Mr. Broadbent:** He is a man who callously passes his responsibilities on to others—and I say that seriously, and not with any degree of pleasure or haste—disregarding in the process some very real human problems.

Besides the specific and well understood federal constitutional responsibilities, there are other federal obligations which directly affect the life of the people living in our cities. But these are not normally seen specifically in the context of city life. Let me illustrate. It is the federal government which has brought in thousands of immigrants but has left the cities to cope with the problems of the consequent congestion. It is the federal government which provides poverty level pensions to our elderly. It is the federal government which imposes on us a deflationary program designed to create urban unemployment. It is the federal government which has spent millions of dollars in building and subsidizing an Arts Centre in Ottawa, an Arts Centre which sells tickets at prices that only the rich in this city can afford. It is this federal government which presented a white paper on taxation. Under its proposals, those living below the poverty level in Halifax, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver would still be taxed. It is this federal government which refuses to bring in a guaranteed minimum income which could make life more meaningful for those living in the hearts of our cities. It is this government's tight money policy which has forced the mayors in virtually all our cities to cut back on needed municipal,

[Mr. Broadbent.]

programs. Finally, Mr. Speaker, it is this federal government, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, which refuses to provide leadership for an urban Canada. Such leadership would be shared of course with our provincial premiers and mayors, and it is strongly desired by Canadians from one coast to the other.

We were all captivated a few years ago by the exciting, urbane and decent opportunities suggested by Expo 67. What we now require are imaginative federal proposals which could cut through jurisdictional hindrances and enable Canadians to create desirable urban communities which have parks, entertainment centres, spaces devoid of automobiles, arts centres equally available to all Canadians whether rich or poor, and communities which foster an enduring development in people of a sense of belonging and fellowship. Later in this debate some of my colleagues will make specific suggestions as to what is required of the federal government in the fields of transportation, housing and pollution, all areas which affect our urban life.

I should like at this time to make some proposals which have a more general application. First, to repeat a point I have already made, the Prime Minister must at last begin to show an interest in what happens in urban Canada. Second, there must be created a department of urban affairs, the prime function of which would be dealing with the prospects and problems of our cities. Its other function would be serving as a catalyst or a stimulant in the much broader field of urbanism in general. In its work, the new department of urban affairs would co-ordinate the work of the relevant federal departments and, together with provincial and municipal governments, seek to create an exciting, interesting and desirable urban Canada. Third, we must grant to cities the right to tax all federal and provincial properties. This is long overdue.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Fourth, there must be the holding of a federal, provincial and municipal conference to which all participants would come as equals. It is time we recognized the cities for what they are; major centres of power, people and problems. A constitutional conference at which all parties are recognized as equals would be an important beginning in this direction.

In addition, I should like to see such conference give serious consideration, and I stress