

The Address—Mr. Andras

have produced roughly 50,000 dwelling unit commitments this year or 77,000 unit commitments this year and last.

In these two years, Mr. Speaker, our low income housing activity will have doubled all the government-financed low income housing ever built before in this country—and I am proud of that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andras: It means that this year housing production directed to the low income group where the great need is, has risen dramatically although total housing starts this year will be about 180,000 compared with a record 210,000 units in 1969. However, when we talk of the total national need and when we think of the great middle ground of Canadians who must be served, let me emphasize again this government's commitment to one million new housing starts of all kinds in the five years from 1970 through to 1974.

● (2:20 p.m.)

Moreover, I am happy to inform the House that the housebuilding activity began increasing in the latter part of this year, because for the month of September housebuilding was running at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 194,800 starts as compared to 188,800 for September, 1969. In 1970, the first quarter, seasonally adjusted starts numbered 166,200. This dropped to 136,600 in the second quarter, but has risen to 185,800 in the third quarter. The main impact on starts of the CMHC special \$200 million innovative program to which I referred and the additional 240 million of commitments authorized in August is still to be felt. All told, this year CMHC will have committed approximately one billion one hundred million dollars in its capital budget, of which about \$960 million have gone directly to housing through programs under sections 16, 35, 36B and 40 of the National Housing Act, with the remainder having been invested in land assembly, urban renewal and sewage treatment loans.

As hon. members know, the private sector mortgage flow has been a serious problem this year. I have held a series of meetings with the approved lenders, banks, trust companies and insurance companies, setting forth capital requirements to meet our five year target of one million new homes, including the pick up of any shortfall this year from the average annual performance required. A second series of meetings with these institutions will be held before the end of the year to get their factual and realistic assessments of their participation. From this information, more specific steps will be considered to ensure mortgage flow. In addition, I plan to invite the senior representatives of the major pension funds of this country to meet with me shortly to discuss the need for increasing investments in residential mortgages by those extremely sizeable sources of capital.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, from the announcement of last week, I have become responsible to parliament for the National Capital Commission, which in a way is the *sine qua non* of all we hope to do. It is attempting to

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bring social comfort and beauty and an expression of national distinction to the capital region of our country to make it the exemplar of justly diffused dignity and opportunity, and we need that exemplar today as we never have before.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Andras: Let our national capital contribute to a national sense of direction in an atmosphere of co-operation and unity, and let that direction be prideful, affirmative and positive as we seek to draw together, particularly in these dark days. Let our capital be, in fact and in symbol, the reflection of a national agreement that is based upon linguistic, cultural and material equity. The National Capital Commission and this government will continue to press forward so as to ensure that the two official languages and the cultural values common to all Canadians are recognized by all governments concerned in these two cities, and in the capital region in general, so that all Canadians may have a feeling of pride and participation in their capital.

In more strictly urban terms, nowhere are there more layers of governments, degrees and opportunities of disparity, problems to be solved and beautiful examples of what can be done than in the capital region covered by the NCC. Here is where multi-level government co-operation in urban policy and programming can work and can be seen to work at its best. This is a leadership opportunity of an important kind. In a real sense, the minister of state responsible for urban affairs and housing shall be a sympathetic advocate in cabinet on urban problems for the provinces, municipalities and urban dwellers. Also, he will report back to them federal concerns and desires. In that process of catalyzing, consulting and co-ordinating, I am hoping there can be held soon a beginning meeting or series of meetings with provincial ministers to determine how best we may establish ongoing consultative processes.

I should like to say in passing that I am very appreciative of the public reactions of initial warmth that I have seen from provincial representatives. I am also happy about the very warm messages of approval and support from the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities and from many individual mayors. I assure them that ways by which municipalities can be helped to deal with the many problems thrust upon them will be foremost in all our thinking.

All our efforts will be directed toward giving Canadians choices about their future. Tentatively we can pose a few indications of what will happen if we continue as we are, which may be a sound option to take, but certainly we should understand it. The unconstrained future will see three vast and nation dominating urban enclaves 30 years hence. They will be Toronto, with a population of six and a half million, Montreal with a population of six and a quarter million, and Vancouver with a population of about two and a half million. Other Canadians cities will double in size, although their positions in relation to the three major centres may grow weaker. I want to repeat that this is a studied forecast of Canadian growth,