

committee. If I may, I will read from the proceedings and evidence of the meeting of the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, and at page 19:4 for February 2, 1982, we find the following:

Mr. Kristiansen moved,—That Clause 3 be amended by striking out lines 37 to 40 on page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

“trial restructuring; and”

Afer debate thereon, the question being put on the amendment, it was by a show of hands, negatived:

Yeas: 6; Nays: 8.

I am not aware that the NDP had six members on that committee and I do recall very clearly that the official opposition voted in favour of that amendment at that time. I wonder what happened to make them reverse their position so suddenly. But that sort of thing shows the same degree of inconsistency, I would suggest, as that party has shown on the question of interest rates and God knows how many other issues during the course of this session of Parliament to date. What they have done is totally irresponsible. It shows they are confused.

Mr. McDermid: How are you going to vote?

Mr. Kristiansen: We will be consistent, Mr. Speaker. We ask every member of the House of Commons to be consistent. If hon. members believe in freedom of information and believe in letting the sun shine in, then let us see some concept of that here. Let hon. members put their votes where their mouths are. If they believe in freedom, let them vote for it. If hon. members believe that important decisions ought to be made in some secret, dark corridor, let them do that too, but let us hear them announce it at the same time.

I commenced my remarks by saying that I wished this piece of legislation were two separate bills. We have achieved some progress since this bill has been in committee and by one or two of the amendments put forward by the government since it has been in the House. There is expanded notice for laid-off employees. The principle and the idea that representatives of employers and employees, and perhaps communities, may have some say is entertained. We think that is a welcome development. In fact, it is a revolutionary development. But having given the power, I would plead with the government to think again and, at some future point, to provide these joint committees and the communities with the tools to do the job that we all know has to be done.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

Housing

NATIONAL HOUSING ACT CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Thursday, February 11, 1982, consideration of the motion of Mr. Cosgrove that Bill C-89, to amend the National Housing Act and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works.

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I was tingling with excitement earlier in the day when I was asked by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) to speak for a few moments on this bill. I thought first that I would speak to you and remind you, Sir, of the contribution made by the hon. member for St. John's East on housing. I think it important that the House and the country remember that in the period of time prior to 1979 it was the hon. member for St. John's East who headed the task force in our party that led to the ultimate introduction, during the period of the Clark government, of the property tax credit legislation, which unfortunately was not passed. I say unfortunately because there was a housing problem during that period of time in terms of interest rates that we were trying to meet and a problem in terms of supply as well. But that problem is nothing compared to the problem that we face today in this country. It is important that we remember that this bill calls for an infusion into the housing market of about \$50 million—

Mr. Cosgrove: Rental housing.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): The rental housing market. The contribution, which could have been made by our bill, thus far would have been worth about \$3 billion to home ownership. It would have encouraged the construction of single family homes, made housing less expensive, freed up the rental housing vacancy rate and could have gone much further than does the minister's bill in terms of creating what this bill has as its objective, namely, some market for rental housing and some availability of stock for rental housing. I say that just to set the proper tone for the debate.

• (1750)

Now what does this bill do? In terms of rental housing it provides interest-free loans of \$7,500 per unit to a maximum of 15,000 units. In terms of the larger centres and some smaller centres, Mr. Speaker, this bill is merely a blemish on the neck of an immense problem. According to CMHC, as many as 40,000 Canadian families may lose their homes this year because of high interest rates. On the average, a \$45,000 a year income is needed for a person to be able to afford an average priced home in Canada. Members know this, but I am going to repeat it anyway, that serious shortages are developing in many centres. Housing starts in 1981, particularly in the last half, were barely one half the level needed to keep up with