

Supply

those treaties the right to adequate housing, housing that promotes family health and well-being. We will certainly want to settle the outstanding native claims in this country, be they special claims where treaties already exist, or be they comprehensive claims where there are no treaties. We would certainly want to recognize aboriginal title, especially where there has been no transfer of land. We would want to get on with the job of defining what aboriginal rights really are. We would want to say that the first citizens of this country certainly have a right to live in communities comparable to the quality of life enjoyed by Canadians elsewhere.

The Nielsen report said we had already gone too far in this direction and we were creating modern suburbs in the northern bush. I do not know whether you have ever seen those modern suburbs in the northern bush, but the ones I have seen can hardly bear that description.

In conclusion I want to say that where self-government institutions have been put in place, such as among the James Bay Cree in northern Quebec, among the Naskapis, the northern Quebec Inuit, where they have their own housing authority, there is a remarkable difference between that which has been done by the Department and that which these people are doing for themselves.

● (1630)

To me that demonstrates that self-government can bring about a transformation in life style, be it economic, health care, education or housing, which is markedly different from that which has gone on through the paternalistic, colonial approach which has been the pattern up to the present time.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cadieux): Questions and comments. Debate. The Hon. Member for LaPrairie (Mr. Jourdenais).

Mr. Fernand Jourdenais (La Prairie): Mr. Speaker, since I welcome this opportunity to speak in this debate, especially since you are in the Chair today. And I am glad to have a chance to clarify for the House the matter of income ceilings for "core need" and explain the whys and wherefors of these ceilings.

The House is aware that our new national housing strategy is the result of serious reflection and the numerous submissions received and meetings held in the past year and a half. This has meant that we were able to consider the positions of all Canadian groups connected with the housing sector, since before giving a new direction to its housing policy, the Conservative Government first wanted to be informed of the views of a wide variety of groups and subsequently reach a consensus. It felt it was necessary to have the participation of provincial and territorial authorities, as well as the groups directly or indirectly concerned, in order to make enlightened and effective decisions.

The Minister responsible for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and his Parliamentary Secretary (Mr. Price) met with a number of groups, including the National Anti-Poverty Organization, the *Association québécoise de l'habitation*, commonly referred to as *Le Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain* or FRAPRU, groups representing the aged, the National Advisory Council on Aging, the handicapped, the Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped, native people, the Native Council of Canada, the Assembly of First Nations Métis organizations. Perhaps I may say, in passing, that for 20 months they have been telling us the Conservative Government does not consult.

There were also organizations representing the construction industry, the financial sector, cooperative housing and municipalities. To name a few: the Canadian Home Builders' Association, the Canadian Bankers' Association, the credit unions, the Canadian Cooperative Credit Society, the Cooperative Housing Foundation, and finally, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Canadian Association of Housing and Renewal Officials. In all, about 35 groups were consulted, although to hear the Opposition, you would think we never consulted anyone.

The list is not exhaustive, but I think it gives an idea of the wide range of groups we consulted. The Government wanted the study to be open, balanced and thorough, and that is what it was.

To start the process, last year the Minister tabled in the House a Consultation Paper on Housing designed to stimulate debate and provide a focus for discussion. Eight thousand copies of this document were distributed, most of them on request I might add. The Minister received more than 300 replies from across the country, briefs and letters which proved to be of great help to proceed further with the review.

This intergovernmental process was launched here in Ottawa at the end of 1984 when the federal Minister played host to a conference of provincial housing Ministers. They came to the conclusion that the provinces and the central Government share some responsibilities in housing, and that co-operation between the two levels of Government is a must if we are to find practical solutions to the housing crisis.

This policy review and the previous consultations focused on some of the major objectives the Minister has in mind with respect to the federal policy. Among other things, we need to reach a national consensus on the appropriate objectives of federal housing policies and programs, and to design projects aimed at eliminating regional disparities and targeting federal assistance to those who need it most. In this respect I might point out that provincial participation is an integral part of the new strategy.

The provinces and the territories were directly involved in these consultations. Their views and concerns were taken in consideration when we drafted the policy and took steps to improve existing programs.