

*The Address—Mr. Macaluso*

resided in urban areas. It is estimated that by 1975 some 80 to 85 per cent will reside in or around urban metropolitan areas. The movement from rural to urban areas continues at a rapid pace.

Canada has become one of the most highly urbanized countries in the world today. Thus the lives of the vast majority of Canadians are greatly affected by the condition of our cities, the quality of the homes in which they live, the ease of transportation, the opportunity for education, access to recreation, and so forth.

A United Nations report in 1965 stated that next to war the problem of all urban areas was the most consequential question facing the governments of the world. Yet, Mr. Speaker, for all their importance, and considering the many problems that they face and will face in the future, our cities have been somewhat neglected by the federal and provincial governments.

The federal government cannot afford any longer to ignore our urban and metropolitan areas, and this is recognized in the speech from the throne. More than 40 per cent of our population now lives and works in our 18 largest city areas in this country with populations over 100,000. The metropolitan environment today has assumed a large and growing significance in Canadian social and economic life. Thus, Mr. Speaker, remedies on a national level are necessary if the problems of our cities and our metropolitan areas are to be solved within a reasonable time. I suggest that the federal government must come to play an increasingly significant role in urban affairs to fill a governmental and financial vacuum.

It is the city and our metropolitan areas with which we will have to deal in the last 30 years of this century. Lewis Mumford, that great student and interpreter of city affairs, has said:

We must restore to the city the maternal, life-nurturing functions, the autonomous activities, the symbiotic associations that have long been neglected or suppressed. For the city should be an organ of love; and the economy of cities is the cure and culture of men.

The problems of metropolitan regions today are national in scope; yet no one is responsible for making sure that all the federal programs which impinge on our metropolitan and urban regions make part of a coherent whole. Nor is anyone responsible for making sure that all the provincial programs fit into a general scheme. Within the metropolitan region itself no authority exists which has the

power to harmonize local plans by the local governments in that metropolitan region.

It is time we raised the basic question of how we in this country can get an institutional framework which will make it possible to treat the metropolitan region as a coherent whole, as we must. This means that we must have new groupings of governmental authority. No longer can we tolerate independent power sources, each with the capacity to thwart the rational development of the whole. Conflicting opinions about the future of the metropolitan area are desirable but conflict without a referee, I suggest, is like a street brawl in which everyone loses. We must invent machinery of government with sufficient power to resolve these inevitable conflicts.

What are some of the problems of the city and our metropolitan areas, Mr. Speaker? I would list them as follows: First of all, there is the movement of people from rural to urban areas and, second, from the centre of cities to the suburbs. Urban population growth has severely strained the existing physical forms and structures of our cities. Provision of basic housekeeping services, light, water, sewage, police and fire protection, are major burdens on the financial capacity of municipal governments which have had to rely for their revenue on the archaic real property tax to deal with today's complex and expensive problems. Also the existence of poverty is a very real consideration in every Canadian city. It retards growth of our cities and drains scarce resources from use in improving facilities and services.

Large scale movement of people into the central cores from rural areas and through immigration has thus introduced serious problems for our local governments in just maintaining satisfactory standards of simple, everyday services and has expanded the problem of dealing with the many disadvantaged Canadians who still just exist in the midst of today's affluence. However, Mr. Speaker, the increase in population in urban Canada has not been followed by a similar increase of urban political control, especially in provincial legislatures across the country. There is across Canada gross underrepresentation of the urban areas. This is the reason, I suggest, that provincial legislatures have been largely insensitive to urban problems and incapable of providing leadership and direction. Even within cities themselves the ability of local government machinery to provide real leadership is sadly lacking. Our system of local government is the classic case of horse and buggy methods in a space age.

[Mr. Macaluso.]