

National Housing Act

This is in my constituency, Mr. Speaker.

—and the implementation of the scheme for the Strathcona subarea of Urban Renewal Scheme 3—

This is also in the constituency of Vancouver East.

—“were described in some detail in the city's briefs of November 28 and November 29, 1968.”

“Council, on March 11, 1969, received a report on the situation and a copy of this report dated February 26, 1969 is attached. The Council directed that a further urgent approach be made to you emphasizing the problems created by the delay and uncertainty.”

● (5:50 p.m.)

This was the representation by the city of Vancouver to the former minister responsible for housing concerning what was happening because of the delay and uncertainty at the present time. On Friday last, the minister told us that the delay and uncertainty were going to continue. He cannot tell us for how long, but it will be for weeks. Again, there is going to be consultation with the provinces and the municipalities in the hope that the minister will be able to lay down specific guidelines and criteria for urban renewal and development projects.

I plead with the minister to speed up these deliberations and to get this urban renewal, which has been hanging fire so long, out of the deep freeze. I plead with him to authorize the plans that have been submitted by the cities, in particular by the city of Vancouver, because the greatest need is in this area which I have outlined and which under redistribution now comes within the riding of Vancouver East.

Under present policies and plans people are not going to be able to buy homes in Vancouver. I think I am safe in saying that there are not too many people in Vancouver East with incomes over \$12,000 a year. If you have not got \$12,000 a year as a basic minimum you certainly cannot buy a house that is going to cost over \$28,000. Moreover, you are not going to be in a position to buy a secondhand home because, according to the latest information I have, the cost of secondhand homes in the city of Vancouver has gone up 20 per cent in the last 12 months. According to the multiple listing service in the city of Vancouver, the average cost of a secondhand home in that city today is over \$23,000.

Not only can people not buy secondhand homes, let alone new homes, but today there are many thousands who cannot even afford to rent homes. The only salvation is a government policy, if necessary introduced through

[Mr. Winch.]

federal, provincial and municipal co-operation, aimed at a rapid extension of public housing and urban redevelopment so that these people can be assured of living under decent conditions, in decent apartments and decent houses. Can we not have action now, and not promises for the future, promises of pie in the sky? These people will have a home when they die, sir. We want them to have one before they die.

I am disturbed about the provision in this bill which will make it permissible to change the interest rate on a mortgage in five year's time. People now cannot afford the interest they have to pay, but at least those who have bought homes now know what the interest rate is. But look at the position of people who do not know what their interest rate charges will be five years from now. Those charges can go up and up. Another hon. member quoted “Canadian Labour” a few moments ago, and I wish to quote it again but from a different paragraph.

Freeing the N.H.A. mortgage rate for renegotiation after five years helps the big financial institutions; increasing the mortgage ceiling helps the buyers who earn \$12,000 a year and can afford \$28,000 homes. But neither move helps the vast majority of Canadian workers with moderate incomes already hard hit by increased costs for food, transportation, medical care, clothing and other necessities.

We ask the government to recognize the truthfulness of that statement.

I am also disturbed about the idea of extending mortgages over a period of 40 years. As was pointed out by a previous speaker on the government side, the average young married man cannot save enough money for a down payment on a house until he is about 30 years old. He will be 70 before the mortgage is paid up. But why am I worried? I think I know something about the construction industry. Each time I am back in Vancouver I make it a practice to look over some of the homes that some of the contractors are building today, and I say to you, sir, that some of the homes that some of the contractors are building today won't stand up for 40 years. They won't stand up for 25 years.

I have been in homes built under the National Housing Act where, one year after the occupant went in, the walls were cracked, the so-called hardwood floors had come apart, and the molding was breaking down. I now want to deal with the question of inspection under C.M.H.C., but before doing so, sir, may I call it six o'clock?