

*Housing Prices*

a group headed by Professor Melvin Charney, professor of architecture at the University of Montreal. The minister has consistently refused to make public that report.

**An hon. Member:** Shame!

**Mr. Orlikow:** I am not surprised. Never have I seen a report commissioned by a government which is so critical or so hostile to a government or to the agencies of government responsible for housing as the report submitted by Professor Charney. Of course, the minister would like to hide it but he has not been successful. Professor Charney says that nearly half of Canada's people cannot afford decent housing and the situation could get worse.

In the report, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the federal government's housing agency, is accused of spending the bulk of its annual \$1 billion budget on new construction and of almost ignoring renovation of houses for the poor. I will return to the report later. I challenge the minister to table the report so that we can see whether I have summarized it correctly. If the minister is afraid to table the report, as he has been until now, let me summarize—

**Mr. Basford:** It is not ready.

**Mr. Orlikow:** The minister says it is not ready. I have it here on my desk.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Orlikow:** Let me refer to a speech made on December 8, 1971, by W. H. Hignett, president of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. According to a report before me, Mr. Hignett, speaking to the Toronto Housebuilders Association, said that about 95 per cent of families in metropolitan Toronto cannot afford a new house in spite of record production that probably will top \$1 billion in 1971. The report then reads:

To support his contention that builders were not providing enough inexpensive housing, Mr. Hignett noted that in 1962 and 1963 less than 10 per cent of the units produced in Toronto cost more than \$20,000.

In 1970, only 10 per cent sold for less than \$26,000. About 45 per cent of the houses for sale in that year went for \$30,000 or more.

That was said two years ago. I am certain that housing costs in Toronto have risen by at least 15 per cent in the last two years. So the head of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation has disproved the minister's contention that we are doing well and meeting the housing needs of the Canadian people.

I now want to deal with specific aspects of housing policy in which the government has failed dismally. First, the government suggests that land assembly will be easier when the magic amendments to the housing legislation are brought forward. Mr. Speaker, not a single dollar in the estimates or in capital expenditures relating to Central Mortgage and Housing is set aside for land assembly. Actually, the biggest newspaper in Toronto that has never failed to support the Liberal party during elections—although it may not have done so between elections—the *Toronto Star*, has called for tri-government co-operation in the field of land assembly and has said that this government has shown absolutely no leadership in the field.

Why did it say that? In every major city of Canada the development of land is under the virtual control of two or three major developers who work in our cities. For instance, in Toronto the big developers are Greenwin, Cadillac and Meridian; in Ottawa, Minto, Campeau and probably another; in Winnipeg there are three developers, and I am sure this is true in Vancouver.

Since these developers own the major parcels of land which can be developed, they can control the price of land. And land prices are skyrocketing. These developers are making tremendous profits. Increased land prices, of course, are affecting tremendously the cost of potential homes and finished homes. That is one effect. The other effect is this: since large developers control most of the land available for home building, the smaller builders who could compete with them and build homes at better prices are being frozen out.

This has resulted from the government's refusal to heed the appeals of all sorts of people, including the *Toronto Star*, and make the lead in assembling land for the poor so that the housing needs of people living in our cities can be met. Why does not the minister, who in his previous portfolio was head of the anti-trust division of government, do something? Why does he not consider how these corporations control land prices and housing? Why does he not look at the practices of these developers—practices which have enabled them to eliminate real competition in the building industry? Does the government not care? Or does the minister think that if he does something the developers and builders in question will not contribute to the campaign funds of the Liberal party in the next election?

**An hon. Member:** Here we go again.

**Mr. Orlikow:** Professor Charney's report shows in detail that if people on low or moderate incomes want houses, they are better off if they do not buy new houses. The report shows that the program of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation has encouraged builders and developers to build new homes. Professor Charney makes crystal clear what the government ought to do, namely, institute programs that will make sure older parts of cities are not destroyed.

Mr. Speaker, as one drives through Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver or Winnipeg one sees some of the best homes—old, established homes—being torn down and replaced by cracker-box, high-rise apartments. Why do we not prevent this? Why force people in the moderate income brackets to go 20 or 30 miles from the central part of the city and live in a new development where there are no trees, shrubs or grass? Why not help to preserve the central parts of our cities?

If you go to the Glebe area of Ottawa or to the central part of Toronto, you will see that most houses are still structurally sound. True, they do not meet modern standards in all respects: there is not a bathroom on every floor, and the kitchens lack the number of cupboards that wives want nowadays. There is not room for a dishwasher. Nevertheless, most of these homes could be renovated and remodelled for a moderate amount of money. Why does Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation say to mortgage companies, "If a citizen wants to buy a new