

Housing

Mr. Whiteway: It is the Canadian people who are being misguided because of the government in general, and the Minister of State for Urban Affairs in particular. Has the hon. member not heard what I have said this afternoon? Does he want to stand in his place now? I will yield the floor to him to defend the promises made on June 17, 1974. I say to the hon. member: defend them if you can, defend them if you will.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whiteway: In fact I see there are three ministers present in the Chamber this afternoon. I will yield the floor to them if they want to defend the Liberal promises of June 17, 1974.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whiteway: The performance of the hon. member this morning reinforces the fact that Manitoba is still ahead in some respects. I see none of the members opposite have risen to defend those promises. In fact I should like to have one Liberal rise to defend the statement that there has been always full consultation with the provinces. That is not so. I will provide hon. members opposite with a copy of this report. They can attempt to defend that, if they wish.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whiteway: It is easy for members opposite to speak from their seats. I want them to stand and put their comments on the record for everyone to read.

Several of my colleagues want to speak today, therefore I will end my remarks. Before doing so, I should like to summarize for the benefit of hon. members opposite. The Minister of State for Urban Affairs, while singing his own praises, attempted to give the notion that matters among the federal government, municipalities and the provinces are in complete harmony, and that it was to the benefit of Canadians to have the federal government doing the job which has to be done, rather than not at all. Should the rights of provinces under the constitution be ignored? It is blatantly wrong and misleading to indicate that there is harmony among the provinces.

In so far as energy is concerned, the minister has attempted to tell us what has been done. In my opinion, what has been done is a dismal failure. The least the minister can do is resign his seat.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his allotted time has expired.

● (1552)

Mr. Hugh A. Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member for Ottawa-Carleton (Mrs. Pigott) brought out a very good point when she said at the commencement of her remarks that housing is the dream of every Canadian. I agree totally with the hon. member that a family, whether it is a young family or a middle aged family, puts priority on the purchase of a house in order to raise a family. I would say also

that as a result of government policy, whether it be the former Conservative party or the present Liberal government, we have now made that dream a reality for the majority of Canadians who wish to own a house.

If I may reminisce for a minute, I recall growing up in Saskatchewan in the early 1930's and 1940's. In that period of time it was the exception rather than the rule for a family to own a house because, before purchasing a house, you pretty well had to have the full amount in your pocket. At that time banks did not give loans for that purpose, nor did financial institutions. You had to save for a period of perhaps 20 or 30 years, at which time you were in your late forties or fifties, before you had a sufficient amount of money with which to buy a house. That was the way the system went. Now when I look around in my riding I see people who are 19, 20 and 21 years of age getting married and purchasing homes under AHOP.

Some hon. members may say that in Toronto, Vancouver and some other larger cities this is pretty difficult because the price of houses in those large centres, especially single family dwellings, is very high. I am pleased to inform hon. members that in my own area of Comox-Alberni on Vancouver Island, in cities such as Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Courtenay, Campbell River or Port Hardy, we are able to build single family dwellings at around \$38,000. The hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert), who is not here at present, was quoting prices of houses in Vancouver. I have no doubt that in Vancouver the average price of a three bedroom home is \$60,000 or \$70,000.

I must say that I myself am opposed to the concept of people in Canada congregating in three or four large centres. If you look at Vancouver, you find that the city cannot expand any more. Fraser Valley is under a land freeze and there is no more room available for the city of Vancouver to expand. I say that is sad. It is not for the province or for the federal government, nor is it anyone's wish, to stop expansion. The city is surrounded by mountains on one side and the ocean on the other, and inevitably the cost of housing is high. Perhaps the solution to that problem is not to encourage industry, business and government to locate in Vancouver. What we should be talking about perhaps is having government, industry, etc., locate in other parts of the province where land is available and cheap and where houses can be built, and not have everyone congregate in large cities such as Vancouver and Toronto.

Instead of criticizing governments for allowing the price of housing to rise in these large cities, what we, along with provincial and municipal governments, should be doing is to make plans for the future to decentralize away from large centres such as the greater Toronto area.

I think there should be some rationalization in housing. We cannot keep making plans for Toronto which will bring in more people and drive up the price of land when there are places in northern Ontario which would welcome the establishment of more industries. People there would be able to live in uncluttered communities, close to nature, and they could hunt and fish. I am sure there would be less crime in such areas and