

### *Housing*

As far as Windsor, Arthabasca and many other municipalities are concerned, I can tell you that all the cuts in the RRAP have affected ridings held by Conservative MPs from Quebec. I am aware that they were not very clever at the time and they could not even find the washrooms on their own, but I dare hope that they will wake up in the coming year and make sure Quebec gets its fair share, just as Liberal Members used to.

Mr. Speaker, these cuts have resulted in 4,600 fewer housing units, a loss of some \$17 million which Quebec was supposed to get but did not, and a loss of 1,330 jobs in the construction industry. Now you know!

Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Member who took part in the debate—the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister I think it was, but I am not sure—referred to the Government's famous consultations and Blue Paper. The Minister responsible for housing is a Minister in name only, for we know that it was the Deputy Prime Minister who was in charge of the study, and I demonstrated to you this afternoon that it was the Deputy Prime Minister who insisted that the social reasons behind the tax exemption on drugs no longer existed. What can you expect in the area of social housing from a Minister who is going to levy a 10 per cent tax?

After spending a great many years in the opposition claiming they knew all the answers. Conservative Members, many of them freshly baked greenhorns now sit on the Government side and do anything but ask questions. In Montreal, the Front d'action populaire en aménagement urbain has held a press conference. This organization includes technical resources and cooperative groups who are asking that the Government establish a Parliamentary committee to consider a reform or an improvement of our housing programs.

Mr. Speaker, the consultation now going on is only a sham. The people in Quebec have not even been able to meet the Minister. They had to be content with the fellow who carries his suitcase, the Parliamentary Secretary. In addition, this meeting could not even be held in French in Quebec. Yet, we all know that Quebec has always been to the forefront as far as housing, cooperative, rehabilitation and repair programs are concerned, that it has innovated in this field under governments of all parties, whether under the Liberals of Robert Bourassa, when I was Member of the National Assembly with my colleague, or under other administrations. Quebecers have always been innovators.

Yet, there is no Quebecer in the consultation group, no Quebecer to take part in the decision-making process. Quebec was ripped off by the Prime Minister when the RRAP and the social housing program were axed.

Mr. Speaker, if we really want to have an effective and healthy policy for housing, we have to stop using band-aid solutions. First, it is essential to hold a national conference and include all those involved in this field. For the moment, the Conservative Party is content to meet its friends who own multiple unit buildings. Of course, and I do not blame them,

they want to make some money, but they forget that they have tenants. We should do what was done in the case of pension reform by Miss Bégin and Mr. Allen MacEachen, the former Minister of Finance, who organized a national conference to discuss the issue of pension reform with all the interested parties. As long as there are secret consultations, apparently by the Minister responsible for housing, but in fact by a task force led by the Deputy Prime Minister, the Government should say so and stop lying to people. The national conference on housing should include architects. They have a lot of impact on the cost of residential construction. The conference should also include young families who could suggest mechanisms to provide ownership opportunities to young couples who want to look forward to the future. Why is it that, as the Hon. Member seems to be trying to say, and I know what he means as I was Parliamentary Secretary for housing, and the Hon. Member has read the text prepared by the officials, will it be suggested that there be a 50 per cent cutback in social and cooperative housing and that this money be used instead for housing subsidies?

Mr. Speaker, if there is no rent control in a given province, a housing subsidy would simply mean that the landlord would increase the rent and the taxpayers' money would go directly into his own pockets. On the other hand, if the housing subsidy is given only to tenants, what will happen in all the rural areas where there are small homeowners who cannot make both ends meet?

Cooperatives therefore were essential and needed to house senior citizens who had low income, had worked all their lives and received small pensions, for they were not accepted in social housing units and did not have enough money to live in residences where rents are higher and geared to more affluent people. So they got together in housing cooperatives or non-profit corporations which made it possible for all people with average income to find accommodation in homes for the elderly where they felt secure because these were new buildings offering protection and various facilities.

The federal-provincial link should also be discussed at those meetings, at this national conference. I happen to know that the Government of Quebec wants the Canadian Government to hand over all such funds so that the province might allocate them as it sees fit. I met with most Quebec groups responsible for cooperative housing and nonprofit organizations, and they all say no. I can tell you that some of them voted yes in the referendum, but in this case they say no, we need protection and the low rental housing sector in Quebec must be administered by the province.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would say it is imperative to debate the housing issue, and I dare hope that the Government will put an end to its pseudo-inquiry and set up a true national housing conference.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest):** I am very sorry to interrupt the Hon. Member for Montreal-Sainte-Marie (Mr.