

National Housing Act

sufficient income you can get a house. According to the last census, eighty-two per cent of the people in this country had incomes of less than \$2,000 a year.

Mr. HOWE: You mean the 1941 census?

Mr. COLDWELL: Of course it is higher now, but even that will not help so much. The social service workers give 20 per cent as the appropriate portion of income that should be paid for housing. I do not know what the average income of this group is today, but I suspect it is not much higher. But suppose we put it at \$2,400 or \$2,500; twenty per cent would be \$500, or just over \$40 a month.

Mr. HOWE: Fifty per cent of rental housing in this country rents at \$40 or less.

Mr. COLDWELL: But look at the housing. How many houses renting at \$40 or less have the proper sanitary conveniences?

Mr. HOWE: Most of them.

Mr. COLDWELL: No, they have not.

Mr. HOWE: I know of over 30,000 we built ourselves that qualify.

Mr. COLDWELL: You can go through this country from one end to the other and find that even in the larger centres sanitary arrangements are absent in the lower rental houses. For example, in the city in which I have lived for a large part of my life I know that there are extensive sections where the houses have no sanitary conveniences. When you go into the smaller towns and villages throughout the country you find that these are entirely absent.

When we are discussing housing we should discuss not only the good houses we are going to build, but also the poor houses we should eliminate. They should be considered along with the plans we have for better class housing.

I intend to vote for the amendment moved by my hon. friend, particularly since you, Mr. Speaker, have indicated that it could be moved on second reading. My hon. friend has taken you at your word.

Mr. J. H. BLACKMORE (Lethbridge): Mr. Speaker, we have heard the minister's speech and we have read the minister's bill, but I feel we must pronounce the speech and the bill, particularly the bill, wholly inadequate. A sure-fire weapon against communism is an adequate housing program. A really adequate housing act is the best general-purpose tool for the building of a nation's human resources, as to numbers, as to health and as to morale. The national housekeeping of any country should have as its aim the purpose which a bird has when it sets up its nest. The bird

[Mr. Coldwell.]

intends to fill her nest with fledglings, and our national housekeeping should aim at filling the Canadian nest with fledglings.

One thing has struck me about our discussions in the house on housing. In a general way they seem so detached, so doctrinaire, and so leisurely. It is time that Canada stopped theorizing and day-dreaming and vaporizing and went to work to get results which are commensurate with Canadian needs. When war broke out we did not have a lot of vaporizing and doctrinaire discussion in the house. The ministers went to work to get results. They got results. They did not come back to the house every once in a while to tell us why they could not get results. The minister himself was one of the first in the nation to get results. We cleared the way so he could get results. He got results during the war. He did not come back here and tell us why he could not do so.

I will grant that there are many difficulties in the way. I am not blaming the minister overmuch under the circumstances, but I think the time has come for a showdown, not only on the part of the government but on the part of hon. members of the house as a whole. We are simply not getting results, and the nation is deteriorating. All the evidence that we can adduce proves that there are far too few houses now in Canada, and yet we are bringing in tens of thousands of immigrants. It has been shown in this debate that we are not building enough houses in the country to supply the needs of the newly formed families; what will the situation be in a few years after so many immigrants will have been brought into the country? We simply have not the time to do what we call in the west fooling around. The situation is serious.

I have been impressed by some of the things that have come over an interesting radio program called, "What is your beef?" Some weeks ago a woman in Toronto complained that she, her husband and three children were living in an attic to which they had to carry their water. Not very long ago a man in Montreal reported that he had read all the advertisements for houses and found that every single one of them said that no children were wanted.

I do not desire to reflect on Ottawa, but this illustration is right under our noses. A man named Rudy Lacasse, who had lost both legs in Holland as a result of a mine accident, reported on March 18, 1948, that he was living in a little upstairs room with an outside stairs in Rockcliffe. Both he and his wife want to adopt a child, but the agencies responsible for letting out children refuse to grant a child