

they imposed, through the recent budget, a freeze on development in major cities; they put forward the pretence that there is no housing crisis in Canada; they have played around with urban renewal so much that nobody, not even the minister, knows what the policy of the government is.

This government, which sits in office because it was able to win seats in the cities, has virtually ignored urban problems in the year it has been in office. There is no indication that they intend to change their practice. We have a right to ask questions and demand answers. What steps is the government taking to follow the lead of the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities on the question of urban transport? What studies is the government conducting on urban development projects and related projects in United States' cities and those of other countries? What attention is it giving to the particular urban aspect of problems like poverty, immigration and Indian Affairs? What understanding is the government prepared to give now regarding the involvement of municipal officials, and people informed about the cities, in constitutional and other relevant discussions?

The election was a year ago. The Prime Minister spent a great deal of his time in the cities. Apparently he has had enough of them. If he continues to treat the cities of Canada as invisible, they will soon have had enough of him.

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew North): Mr. Speaker, we have heard this afternoon many spokesmen for the urban areas of Canada. The arguments we heard could be used perfectly well against the further rapid growth of particular areas in Canada which prejudice rural areas and small communities across Canada.

Mr. McCleave: Stamp out Toronto!

Mr. Hopkins: We have heard in the house many arguments advanced about the constitutional conflict. We had a debate all day last Monday in connection with a motion on pollution when we were considering vote No. 1 of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. The committee report was an excellent one. I see that the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert) is smiling. I am sure he agrees with me on that point.

We cannot overlook the constitutional conflict. The tack taken in many parts of the house is to the effect that we should just bulldoze through in respect of our national programs and forget about the provinces and

Alleged Failure to Cope With Urban Growth those people who are supporters of provincial autonomy. Hon. members have been telling the government to go ahead and bulldoze over the top of the provinces.

Mr. Woolliams: What about medicare?

Mr. Hopkins: The other day the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch) said that the Ottawa River stinks. That was when I was mentioning the constitutional conflict that exists in connection with that river. I agree with the hon. member but I say to him through you, Mr. Speaker, that it does not stink any more than do the motions placed before the house on Monday and today which try to lay the full blame on the federal government for the pollution which exists.

There is an obvious purpose in trying to lay total responsibility on the federal government at a time when the government does not by any means have total constitutional responsibility in this field. Comments were made to the effect that great legislation to combat pollution had been brought forward in the United States. Anyone in the house who makes that kind of comment should visit the United States and look into the problem of pollution they have there. If they did, I do not think they would praise to the extent they have the work that has been done in that country.

I reiterate what I said the other day. If the federal government had exclusive powers in this field, such as the United States government has, it would be giving more direction. I say to members of the opposition that when they make these statements they are in effect demanding more constitutional power for the federal government. I wholeheartedly agree—perhaps I should not go quite that far.

Mr. Woolliams: Oh, go ahead.

Mr. Hopkins: I am very much in agreement with the first prime minister of this country, Sir John A. Macdonald, who wanted the federal government to be strong. We would be in a better position today if we had a strong federal government constitutionally. Then we could go ahead and solve some of the problems facing us. If the federal government defaulted in respect of the work that needed to be done in this area, and had the constitutional power to do it, the government could be blamed. But I ask members of the opposition not to drag in this red herring of bestowing on the federal government all the powers that are jealously guarded by provincial administrations.