

*Housing*

Corporation which describes a series of programs set up by the Canadian government to answer the needs of Canadians in the field of housing. This information kit features the Assisted Home Ownership Program and the Low Rental Housing Assistance Program which has enabled us to get more apartments built by private enterprise in the great urban communities of Canada in order to raise a vacancy rate which was too low and so as to provide people who want to get housing with the possibility of a greater choice in the type of apartment they want to rent.

Let me mention programs that work quite well namely the Non-Profit Housing Assistance Program and the Cooperative Housing Assistance Program which are another aspect of the various activities of the Canadian government which aim not only at helping and supporting private enterprise in the crucial role it can play regarding housing construction, but also enable people with middle or low income to get together in a housing cooperative or a non-profit corporation precisely to benefit from grants from the Canadian government there inhabiting housing which cost much less than similar housing which can be found on the conventional market.

We have tried through the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to put forward a series of programs dealing with the development and the improvement of urban and municipal environments. We have noticed that one of the greatest difficulties presently encountered by municipalities has to do with their financing, the result of which being that provincial governments are subsidizing them to a certain extent but also that all the funds they are getting are always associated with particular conditions in such a way that Canadian municipalities do not truly enjoy the freedom of action they should have. So, the Canadian government in an important effort to help and support municipal priorities has decided to create the Municipal Incentive Grants Program for the municipalities, the Neighbourhood Improvement Program, the Land Assembly Assistance Program as well as the Municipal Infrastructure Program which are precisely designed to help municipalities to better serve the needs of their citizens, especially the Municipal Incentive Grants program which provides a grant given directly to a municipality which does not have to be accountable for the use it decides to make of these funds except before its own citizens so that this annual injection of several thousand dollars in municipal finances is a way through which the Canadian government acknowledges the legitimate and fundamental role played by municipal governments in Canadian society. There is, of course, the provincial level of government which plays a priority role which we acknowledge but no one should be under the impression that if there are administrative difficulties with certain programs one must necessarily entail that they should be handed down by the federal government to the provincial level.

I say that the idea that there is an absolute need to decentralize from the federal to the provincial level is wrong. In several cases it would be much better to decentralize from the provincial to the municipal level. We agree that we would be better able to carry out a certain number of our respon-

sibilities at the federal level and that they would be carried out better, in the better interest of the people, at another level of government than the federal level, but not necessarily the provincial level. If it is true that the grassroots people would be better served by the government which is closest to them, what does this mean? It means the municipal level. Through the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation programs we have fully recognized this important role that municipalities have to play vis-à-vis the people and we want through those programs to give them large grants to enable them to take their full responsibilities at the municipal level. I think that this uttering of accusations that the government of Canada is getting into provincial jurisdictions will have to stop because that is not where the problem is.

The problem, Mr. Speaker, is that provincial authorities are too jealous of their responsibilities. Every time Ottawa does something they start crying that Ottawa should not be doing it. So I am very disappointed at the attitude of the official opposition, the Progressive Conservative Party, and to see that they are opposed to the government of Canada trying to help municipalities fully assume their responsibilities in the area of the development of master plans for municipalities and urban development. I think there is an absolute need to give the municipalities more financial resources and immediate responsibilities so they will be able to assume a role they can fully play and much better than the provinces themselves.

[English]

**Mr. Paproski:** We want you to do some work. Never mind being a campaign manager for Quebec. Do what you are paid to do.

**Mrs. Pigott:** No wonder you are in Mr. Lévesque's black books.

**Mr. Paproski:** Because of you the Parti Québécois won the last election. We know what happened on November 15.

[Translation]

**Mr. Ouellet:** I think hon. members of the Progressive Conservative Party do not like to hear the truth but I think they have been caught in their own trap by trying to criticize the Canadian government, simply repeating the same nonsense we have been hearing for years from some provincial politicians who are fundamentally overly jealous of their responsibilities. Mr. Speaker, I want to say once again that the Canadian government does not make it its ambition to take up responsibilities not given to it by our constitution. The Canadian government, through the Ministry of Urban Affairs or through the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, only wants to help those who have a direct responsibility in this field, namely the municipal authorities, to play their part and to provide Canadians with better services by co-operating with municipal and provincial governments. This is our part and we want to play it.

As a conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I can only come back to the criticisms passed on by the Progressive Conservative Party with regard to the Canadian Home Insulation Program; they