

The Budget—Mr. Orlikow

The tragedy in this country, the disgrace to government and parliament is that there are tens of thousands of people in every city, one of the worst of which is Montreal, and if the hon. member for Laprairie does not know how bad it is, I refer him to an article in *Weekend* magazine of about three weeks ago which describes how housing units are being destroyed in that city to make way for the Olympics—

Mr. Boulanger: That is not true, and you know it.

Mr. Orlikow: I would be happy to debate this matter with the hon. member who is interjecting, but he should make his own speech.

Mr. Boulanger: I will.

Mr. Orlikow: There are tens of thousands of people in every city of this country—families with two, three and four children—who cannot afford to buy houses. In fact, they cannot afford to rent at the commercial market rates. These are the people who need public housing units. They are the ones being destroyed by this government's callous disregard for their needs. There is no commitment on the part of this government to provide funds for people who need housing.

Mr. Boulanger: Mr. Speaker, will the hon. member permit me to ask one question?

Mr. Orlikow: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Boulanger: Does the hon. member know that in my constituency in Montreal—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I simply ask the hon. member to speak to the Chair now that he has obtained from the hon. member permission to put a question.

[*English*]

Mr. Boulanger: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; I am sorry. Does the hon. member know that in my constituency in Montreal a workingman today can buy a four-bedroom house for \$22,500?

Mr. Orlikow: What I am concerned about and what I am talking about—

Some hon. Members: Answer.

Mr. Orlikow: Of course I know that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Boulanger: Then say it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Orlikow: How many times does one have to repeat a statement to get it through the thick head of the hon. member opposite? The point I have repeatedly made in this House is that there are tens of thousands of people—husbands with incomes of \$5,000 or \$6,000 a year, with two or three children—who cannot afford to buy houses, even with AHOP. They are the ones I am talking about. The hon. member should know that is a fact.

[*Mr. Orlikow.*]

Mr. Boulanger: We know that people on social welfare cannot buy houses.

Mr. Orlikow: I do not mind the hon. member interjecting, but I only have another three or four minutes and I would like to continue my speech. As far as housing is concerned, the government has not met the needs of those in the bottom 40 per cent of the income bracket. That statement has been echoed by every mayor in this country, with the possible exception of the mayor of Montreal who is not very concerned about housing.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Orlikow: It has been echoed by every provincial premier whether he be NDP, Liberal or Conservative. It is recognized by every person who is interested.

In the few minutes I have left, I want to deal with the proposal by the minister unilaterally to change the basic principle which we have followed in the financing of medical and hospital care, where Ottawa pays 50 per cent of the cost. This principle has been established for as long as we have had medical and hospital insurance. Many of the provinces—I think especially of the one to come in last, Ontario—were very hesitant to come into these plans. They did not want universal plans; they thought voluntary plans were better. The reason they came into them was that they could not refuse; their voters would have been very angry if they had not picked up the money which Ottawa was making available.

The Minister of Finance now says, in effect, that it does not matter that a province has been in from the beginning or that the government urged, enticed and pressured the provinces to come in. Despite that, and despite the fact that health costs increase from 18 per cent to 20 per cent a year, the government have decided they cannot afford it. As soon as they can change the agreements, either by law or by giving notice, they will pay substantially less than 50 per cent, and the government are telling the provinces now how much less they, the government, are going to pay. Is it any wonder the provincial ministers of health are upset? I could quote from a telegram which the Manitoba minister of health sent to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde); however, my friend opposite would say that is purely partisan politics.

Mr. Boulanger: Of course.

Mr. Orlikow: For his benefit I will quote from a communiqué sent to the Minister of National Health and Welfare by the Quebec minister of social affairs. I think that province has a Liberal government. I quote:

I deplore the unilateral setting of a ceiling without notice of federal participation in medical insurance—The evolution of medical care cannot be carried out in such a short time-span and this federal decision causes major uncertainties in its administration by the provinces.

Is the Quebec minister of social affairs a socialist?

Mr. Boulanger: Did you read what he said last night?

Mr. Orlikow: I am quoting what the minister said. It is not surprising, because according to officials of the Manitoba finance department, if the federal government sticks to its decision the provinces will be paying an