

Suggested Lack of Urban Policy

bers—and happily they are a minority—know that the resolution of the urban challenge lies with no one minister, the cabinet or even the House of Commons. It goes beyond this House to the Provinces and the municipalities. Indeed, the question is now extended throughout the world.

During the last session of the United Nations a special report was issued regarding the deteriorating conditions of urban centres throughout the world. Significantly, as yet no one has produced the kind of solutions which are demanded of the minister in this debate in the House today. If our urban centres are to be decent places in which to live, a vast co-operative effort involving all levels of government and all segments of the community will be required. As we know, the municipalities in the first instance are the creatures of the provincial governments.

It is significant that many provincial governments, including the home province of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), have boasted for the past number of years of either a break-even budget or a surplus. In most cases the same cannot be said about the municipal governments or the federal government. There is an indication that in the case of some provincial governments there could be a greater degree of generosity extended to their municipal governments. Before the opposition members lecture the federal government about its responsibility to unilaterally solve the urban problem, they should turn as well to their provincial governments.

We are told that the cities of Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Ottawa and Hamilton are in trouble and that the trouble is deepening. Kenneth Galbraith said:

"The great cities in western industrial society have long been in trouble."

This "trouble" will not be solved alone by the simplistic solutions advanced by the mover of this motion, who calls among other actions for the application of a regional district income tax superimposed presumably on existing levies. The problem will not be solved by any ingenious cost-sharing formula and the proclamation of a new department of urban affairs. The latter idea was first advanced three or four years ago by a number of Liberal members in convention. While the idea has merit, it represents yet only another partial solution.

The mover of this resolution has accused the government of failing to demonstrate an interest in the problem of urban growth. In

[Mr. Perrault.]

this regard, I note with interest the news release of the New Democratic Party. I quote paragraph 4 of that release:

We do not need more funds put into our present piecemeal programs such as urban renewal, transportation and pollution control—it is those very programs which are destroying our cities.

I hope at some point, Mr. Speaker, that the members of the New Democratic Party will tell this to the 17,690 people of British Columbia who benefited from housing starts initiated by this minister in 1969. I hope they will bear their great message of hope that we should not spend any more money on NHA loans to the thousands of people in metropolitan Vancouver who live in the 2,935 NHA dwelling units built last year despite the supposed inaction of this minister. I hope they will bear the great progressive message of "hold the line" to those people benefitting from low rental housing in the greater Vancouver area. In 1969 \$1,681,000 was approved, to provide 1,300 units and 265 beds. I trust that the great message from the New Democratic Party tonight, namely, that we do not need more funds put into our present allegedly piecemeal program, will be taken to heart by the people living in those 1,300 units and the 265 bedroom units made possible by federal loans. And what of those in 3,116 units and 864 hostel beds made possible through federal loan assistance totalling \$20,264,000 in 1969 in the lower mainland area of greater Vancouver? Does this represent inaction?

This is hardly the record of a government which is dedicated to inaction and convinced that nothing should be done. The mover of the resolution wants to grant local governments the power to levy as income tax, presumably in addition to the burdens now being carried. Surely Canadian tax reform should stop at nothing less than a complete review of taxes borne by all sections of the community, the incidence and the justice of those taxes and a redistribution of revenues and responsibilities among all levels of government.

I find it incomprehensible that in today's highly mobile Canadian society local governments still bear such a deadweight burden of welfare costs. In the province of British Columbia this amounts to 43 per cent. I find it incomprehensible to support the injustice of our present system of financing education in most provinces. What God-given ability is possessed by those who happen to live in a family home or on a family farm to support most of the education in Canada? The concept