

government of that day spent a good fraction of that \$100 million studying housing, and the answers were clear if only the government had had the will and the backbone to act.

After all this list of studies in face of the problems we have, what do we get? Ten days ago in this House the minister, no matter how much his parliamentary secretary apologizes to us, announced in effect another \$100 million study. What will this do for the low and middle income people of this country who cannot wait ten years for the minister to complete his study? They want housing today. If this government would only stop the waste in so many of its other programs, and run an efficient ship, we might do something about interest rates, which includes interest rates on mortgages, and we might with the municipalities and the provinces do something about serviced land.

Does this minister blame it on other countries and say that pressures from outside affect the high cost of housing, just as does the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) who tells us we cannot do anything about inflation because it is a universal problem and we have to ride with it? Or does not the minister really think, as does the leader of our party who has sat with municipal authorities and heads of the provinces, that he could do something about providing lower cost serviced land? Does he not think, in a spirit of bipartisanship, of adopting at long last our proposal to abolish the 11 per cent sales tax on building materials? That is most important.

It is my view that so long as there is a general, high rate of inflation in this country due to the irresponsible monetary and fiscal policies of this government, land interest rates and the general cost of housing will continue to go up and up. Because of their intangibility, they will always be, in my view, an inflation leader as are gold, silver and other hard commodities. It is my view that the housing policy of the present government is responsible for a great deal of what I call legitimate social unrest. It is the major source of apprehension about the future of many of our young people. It threatens the financial independence of the family unit and, what is worse, makes us a nation of debtors. In this moral climate housing is being put out of the reach of most Canadians. In my view, under the housing policies of this government we are now into another kind of age, especially for the low and middle income people—a new age of serfdom and servility.

I am very glad to note, however, that tonight we have a real chance that the party to my left will support our motion because the housing spokesman for the NDP, after the minister made his recent announcement, described the program as involving “the wrong spending at the wrong time and in the completely wrong area”. He stated, in reply to the minister, that nowhere was there any indication that the government intends, at least before the budget is introduced, to move in a serious way to deal with the housing situation. He said there is every indication that in this area of policy we are saddled with a do-nothing government. So I do not expect the members of the NDP tonight to support a do-nothing government, a government which once the housing bill was passed last spring presumably decided that enough had been accomplished.

Urban Affairs

The housing critic of the NDP went on to say that he wished to put forward his reason for believing that the government's attitude is palpably absurd, that indeed it involves a serious question of social morality and the government has copped out altogether on this issue. I do not think that tonight the members of the NDP will support a government which has completely copped out in the housing field. The member of the NDP went on to say: “The minister said he wants this conference to be known as Habitat 2000”. Well, people in my riding want houses before the year 2000.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graftey: He went on to suggest that all this program will mean is \$100 million down the drain—of no help to people in meeting housing requirements in Canada. Will the NDP tonight vote to put \$100 million down the drain? Mr. Howe used to say, “What's a million?” Today, if they vote with the government, the NDP will be saying: “What's \$100 million?”

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has expired.

● (2030)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Olivier (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, I should like to point out that it is rather difficult to speak as pessimistically as the previous speaker. I wonder if this is not due to the fact that members on this side of the House can finally rejoice at the fact that some people believe that we have to act now to solve the problems of the future for urban Canada.

My illustrious colleague has spoken strictly about building and not about the urban movement phenomenon of 1961, when we were building dormitory cities and rows of bungalows, which created problems at the municipal level. A few years later, municipal unity had to be established to make the situation viable and to avoid collecting the maximum amount of taxes at the municipal level. In my opinion, those are the kinds of problems that we must face immediately.

Mr. Speaker, the urban constituency of Longueuil is situated on the south shore some twenty miles from that of the previous speaker but however, I do not share his pessimism. If you allow me, I would like to quote a few examples. The City of Longueuil had some 90,000 inhabitants in 1969. In four years, the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation invested there over \$89 million. If this is not taking care of families, of people and citizens who really need houses, I wonder how we must invest our money and what else we can do to help them buy a house.

It is quite easy to say: The people are poor, they are not in a position to buy a house. Mr. Speaker, when one has lived the problem, one really knows what it is. It is not necessarily one of lack of money or means because, in the province of Quebec, \$35,000 or \$40,000 houses were built before, and Quebecers dreamed of one day owning their own home. Today, Quebecers can own a home thanks to the federal government. They can afford one if they make an annual income of \$6,000, \$7,000 or \$8,000.