

Request for Housing Statement

clusion of the Canadian Conference on Housing held in 1968, that housing is just as socially necessary as is education. The need for the construction of all types of housing in this country far exceeds the money which is, or will be, available even if we could bring interest rates down.

There are demands in this country for high rise office buildings with air conditioning and carpeting from wall to wall; there are demands for factories, for larger filling stations or service stations—service centres as they are now called; for high priced apartment buildings, for public housing and for houses for ordinary citizens. The total demand is far greater than the amount of money, labour and materials which we can accumulate in any one year. It is not surprising that banks and the finance companies are not doing more in the private housing field. After all, they are primarily interested in making profits for their shareholders. I am not being critical of them, bearing in mind the kind of society in which we live. I refer the hon. member for Don Valley to the announcement yesterday or today that bank profits were up by more than 25 per cent in the first six months of this year as compared to last year. It is no wonder the banks are much more interested in putting their money into shopping centres, filling stations, office buildings and luxury hotels than they are in ordinary housing.

As I say, I cannot blame them. They are there to make a profit for their shareholders. But we can blame governments of Canada, both federal and provincial, for permitting this state of affairs to continue and for failing to establish, through consultation, a system of priorities. I submit there is much more need in Ottawa for 2,000 moderately priced homes than there is for the third building which the Campeau Construction Company is putting up very near here at the present time.

• (4:40 p.m.)

I submit there is much more need for three or four thousand housing units, public or private, in the city of Toronto than for another Toronto-Dominion Centre in the city of Toronto. I submit there is more need for 2,000 homes in Winnipeg than for the Richardson building that was opened some months ago. But until governments in this country look at the problem in this way, and people tell the governments in Canada that housing is the number one priority, we will continue to do what we have been doing until now and build 180,000 housing units when we need 250,000.

[Mr. Orlikow.]

We will continue to encourage the building of more office buildings in Ottawa so that civil servants can move from temporary buildings, which are old but habitable, into high rise buildings that are air conditioned and all the rest. We will continue to permit oil companies to build more filling stations and permit the building of more shopping centres, the cost of which is borne by the consumer in the price of the groceries she has to buy in order to live.

In closing, I hope the minister will stop being so complacent, which is the only way I can describe the speech that he made today. I hope that even though we do not know who are members of this task force, what subject it will be studying and at what cost, the minister will put it to work to examine some of the housing problems facing this country. When this work is completed I hope the federal government will tell the provinces and municipalities that those things which need doing the most should be done. This is not the building of fancy office buildings or high rise luxury apartment buildings, but rather the kind of homes that the ordinary people of this country who earn \$60, \$70, \$80 or \$100 a week need so desperately at this time.

Mr. Kaplan: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Orlikow: Certainly.

Mr. Kaplan: What evidence has the hon. member for thinking that the banks and trust companies earn a greater return on loans for office buildings and shopping centres than on loans for apartment buildings?

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, I think the answer is very simple. It is obvious where the money is going and that that is where the action is. Apart from making more money, I am sure the hon. member will agree it is much simpler for a bank or a mortgage or trust company to lend \$5 million, if I may use that figure as an example, to just one company so there is one transaction, to build one building, rather than to lend the same amount to a couple of thousand individual prospective homeowners. As I say, the answer is simple; the evidence is that the homes we need are not being built. Instead, office buildings, hotels, shopping centres and filling stations are being constructed.

Mr. Chas. L. Caccia (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, hon. members opposite who have