

## CMHC Act

when I said that the previous speakers did not want to deal with the subject of this debate.

I want to repeat to the hon. member who is trying to interrupt me that it is my turn to speak, and that I do so frankly, openly, like those who have preceded me.

First of all, I wish to congratulate the hon. member for York West (Mr. Fleming) for his initiative in presenting this motion. I agree totally with him when he says that the present name of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation does not describe appropriately the role this Crown corporation is playing and will play in the life of Canadians. "Habitat Canada", in both official languages, indicates more specifically to what extent the corporation is concerned with the living conditions of the people in all parts of the country, in villages and small cities, in urban areas and surrounding regions.

While advocating the adoption of the new name, I should not however want to give the impression that the corporation will be less concerned with basic housing questions, and mortgages which are fundamental if all Canadians are to be given a chance to buy proper housing within their means. There is no doubt that the top priority of the government and the corporation in coming months will be to increase considerably housing construction especially in the lower-price bracket, and to make sure that these are accessible to those in greatest need of them. We trust we will be able to find a solution to housing problems which confront us now and which are essentially—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin):** Order. I have asked hon. members to try, as much as possible, to stick to the subject of Bill C-215, that is change of name.

[English]

**Mr. De Bané:** Madam Speaker, with regard to the private bill of the hon. member for York West I want to say on behalf of the government that we totally approve of its intent. I remind hon. members that if you can identify this federal agency in English by the four letters "CMHC", in French that is not possible. I have never heard anyone identify "la société" with the combination of letters "SCHL"; in French you have to say "la Société centrale d'hypothèques et de logement". In English you can identify Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation by the capital letters "CMHC"; in French you must give the total title.

The initiative taken by the hon. member for York West represents, in my opinion, more fully the new role of CMHC, which no more looks upon itself only as a banker, as it did 20 years ago. For 20 years CMHC has been an instrument in the federal government's social policy.

**Mr. McKinnon:** You are getting out of order again.

**Mr. De Bané:** You shut up and listen to me—O.K.?

[Translation]

Therefore, I think, Madam Speaker, that the hon. member's project fully reflects the role played by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, which has been very beneficial in Canadian history, especially since the last war.

[Mr. De Bané.]

[English]

For all these reasons the government welcomes the initiative taken by the hon. member for York West, and on behalf of my minister I commend the bill to hon. members for their support.

**Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre):** Madam Speaker, I should like to say, first of all, that I agree with the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert) on one point. Habitat Canada sounds to me like a new environmental group.

The parliamentary secretary talked about the desirability of having names equally understood in both languages. As a philosophy in terms of naming new institutions this is admirable, and I am wholeheartedly in favour of such an approach. But what are we going to see now—a whole string of private members' bills wanting to change the names of all Crown corporations, such as the CNR, the Polymer Corporation, Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, Northern Transportation Limited, and so on and so forth?

I think I can speak for the majority of my party when I say that we recognize that some of our predecessors in this institution did not pay as much attention to being able to identify government operations, departments or Crown corporations in both languages as they should, and thus did not choose quite as wisely as they might have. But surely this is little reason to go altering all these names, or at least to alter this name.

I associate habitat with some form of architecture. As the dictionary indicates, it is a word that means nothing. I very often get the feeling that members on the government side think that a change in name is almost as good as a policy. I am not going to get off on to the subject of housing—though Lord knows there is ample room to talk about that subject for several days, not to mention just the few minutes available to me—other than to say that the hon. member is paying attention to historical precedents in this House. I have heard a rumour or story circulating, that I have not had a chance to check out personally, about a current member of government whose claim to fame is a private member's bill that accomplished something along these lines.

● (1750)

The housing problems which exist in Canada are enormously severe. In the last three months the cost of a serviced lot in Calgary went up 12 per cent. What is being done in that regard? I do not know how many employees there are in CMHC, but I suggest the worst thing we could do right now is send them scurrying around the country changing all the literature and hanging new signs on their buildings. Surely what they should be doing is concentrating on housing problems. If we need a new name, Housing Canada would make a lot more sense than Habitat Canada.

I recognize the difficulties in respect of the nature of the two languages to which the parliamentary secretary has alluded, but this does not seem to have hurt IBM, CIL, the CPR or a lot of other companies. At this stage of the game I think it would be reasonable on our part to save the government a lot of money by refusing to order employees of CMHC to run around changing the letters on their stationery and on their buildings when they should be