

Request for Housing Statement

rate of 3 per cent has jumped to 6 per cent by 1970, by 1972 the NDP will be offering 12 per cent mortgages; I suggest this is not good enough.

Mr. Orlikow: We have those now.

Mr. Goode: These members are insisting on 6 per cent mortgages, but what are they going to do about those people who presently have mortgages at rates of interest between 7 and 10 per cent? Are they going to subsidize them as well? If so, where will they find the money?

They also talk of rent control. With great fanfare they tell the people of Canada that they are going to bring in rent controls. They know very well that the federal government cannot introduce rent controls. Furthermore, these rent controls would have to be enforced by the provincial governments, and certainly I have not seen the government of Manitoba showing any sign of moving into this field at an early date, as hon. members suggest. The provincial government of Manitoba is not entering this field, and I suggest that an NDP federal government would not either.

The urban challenge of the 1970's is with us. If we do not act quickly with courage and imagination, this challenge may well become a catastrophe from which Canada will never recover.

• (3:40 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to contribute, in a very modest way, to the debate on the motion proposed today on housing. I think the choice could not have been wiser in view of the sorry and desperate plight of the greater part of our population in this field.

We all agree that the proposals of this government have only brought inadequate results. Some will even say that the government has done nothing, but I will go even further. However, it is to be wondered whether the government has done enough and whether it might not do more. I think we can answer this question.

For the past year or year and a half, they have been talking about giving a new impetus to housing in the near future, and they are still talking about it. Since the unemployment rate is particularly alarming in Quebec, I think it is the duty of Quebec members to press the government to come up with suggestions, proposals and much more effective legislation than those put forward in the last years.

[Mr. Goode.]

How can a new impetus be given to the housing industry in the short term? There has been a lack of realism, I think. The minister mentioned earlier that millions had been spent on housing. But we know very well that even those considerable amounts are not adequate considering the great number of people with a low income.

I am not in the habit of limiting myself to criticism. But I think that the pitiful failure of the government to provide housing for low-income groups should prompt us to press more strongly than ever for more effective measures on their behalf.

It was said that a number of housing units had been built, but the interest rate on mortgages, which can be most detrimental to the building industry, has always been glossed over.

I have already urged that loans at 5 or 6 per cent be made available to those earning \$10,000 or less per year. I will be told: But who will pay the difference in interest? I will answer that it is obviously up to the government to make up the difference. However, I do not believe that easier loans, longer amortization periods up to 40 years will allow more Canadian citizens to purchase a house, for they will then have to pay for it three times over.

Reference is made to low-cost housing, and I think I am in a position to say a few words on this matter. This week, I got the happy news: in my constituency, more particularly in the city of Joliette, a \$600,000 housing project will be built. Now those \$600,000 can at the most allow the construction of 51 3 and 4 room dwellings and this is a 50-year loan bearing at 8 per cent interest. Therefore, the owners will have to pay a monthly rent of \$136 for a 3-room dwelling and of \$150 for a 4-room dwelling. I do not believe that this can be considered low-cost housing. Surely, this project is important for my area and this large city of my constituency. I appreciate the launching of the project, but I know very well that only professional people will benefit from it.

It is therefore our duty, as members of this House, to demand more realistic action for small wage-earners. We have the opportunity today to try again and ask the minister to be more compassionate and understanding and to make it possible for small wage-earners to live in adequate dwellings with suitable rents.

It is true that for several years, we have been asking the removal of that hateful 11 per cent tax on building materials. Reference