

this spending of \$100 million, and tonight by deed instead of words show the government of Canada that he stands with the people of Canada and the representatives of Canada in this House.

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the motion before the House states, in the words of the hon. member who has just sat down, that the urban demonstration program and the supporting fund of \$100 million that I announced some two weeks ago is a diversionary tactic. Having now listened to the hon. member twice in two days, which is almost too much, I can only say that we are having a motion on diversionary tactics written by an expert in diversion.

I regret very much the reaction of the hon. member and of other hon. members in the House to my announcement of two weeks ago. It may well have resulted from the timing of the announcement which could have been made on a much better day. It may have resulted from the nature of the announcement two weeks ago about the urban demonstration fund. However, the reason may be that the philosophy of the Official Opposition is to oppose change and to oppose innovation and improvement.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Basford: Their reaction may well be a deliberate misinterpretation of my statement two weeks ago, and I challenge the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) to read that statement again and to clear up his own obvious and deliberate misconception about it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Basford: Finally, I believe that there is a misunderstanding among some members of the House and some members of the media, based on an honest misconception of what the urban demonstration program and fund are expected to accomplish, and it is to that honest misunderstanding and misconception that I want to address my remarks today.

First, the demonstration program is not another research program. I state unequivocally here today that it is not a five year research binge, as the hon. member described it; it is not intended to fund research projects and it will not fund them. I believe the hon. member for Calgary North and also the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) were concerned that this was a research project. If the program and the fund were intended for such purposes they would not have had my support. I agree with what one hon. member said, that we have been researched to death in this country. Our urban problems call for action and not for further research. The demonstration program and fund are intended to support such action. They are for real projects with real answers to real problems.

Second, the demonstration program is not a study program, and I challenge the hon. member for Calgary North to find the word "study" in that statement or any other statement that has been issued in relation to the program. We have had an over abundance of urban studies in this country, I agree.

Mr. Hellyer: Hear, hear!

Urban Affairs

Mr. Basford: One of my problems—some of it contributed by the hon. member opposite who has just yelled "hear, hear"—is sifting through the various studies and the welters of paper in order to develop policies.

• (1550)

Third, Mr. Speaker, the demonstration program is not a gimmick, as the hon. member suggests, devised solely for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. Probably a few projects from the program will be advanced for this important international conference, but the goal of the program is Canadian projects which are solving real Canadian problems, or can be made to solve Canadian problems. The program is designed to benefit communities across Canada, regardless of size and regardless of location, on an equitable geographical basis.

Where the hon. member for Calgary North's absolute misconception is obviously apparent lies in the fact that the demonstration program is not a substitute, and is not put forward as a substitute for a housing program. The expenditure of \$20 million in the fiscal year 1975, which does not start until next spring, or in 1976, 1977, 1978 or 1979 clearly would have no visible impact at all on our immediate housing needs.

Mr. Woolliams: Of course, it wouldn't.

Mr. Basford: The hon. member makes a great deal of that. This shows his total misconception of the objectives. For the opposition to suggest that we devote project funds of this scale to our housing needs would be laughable if it did not indicate a total lack of perception and understanding. This year in this country we will be spending over \$6 billion on housing alone, apart from other urban matters such as transportation. The federal government's contribution to that expenditure will be about \$1¼ billion. Those are actual federal dollars being spent in the calendar year 1974 for housing and related projects and programs.

As one newspaper, the *Globe and Mail*, commented editorially, it is time to use ideas that are on the table, to get good ideas off the shelf and implemented. That is the express purpose of this fund. It has been my experience, and the experience of others, that this country is full of good ideas to solve many urban problems, housing problems, transportation problems and others. But it takes an injection of government leadership and government cash to get those ideas and solutions off the table, to use the words of the *Globe and Mail*, and into operation, into bricks and mortar. That is what this program is for, and that is what the fund will finance. It will finance action on ideas, action to reduce costs, action on projects, action to make good ideas workable, action to put two or more ideas together into a better solution to urban problems, action to show new ways of doing things, or ways of adapting existing methods to new demands—in short, action to implement, in every region across Canada, solutions to the problems facing Canadian communities.

I admit to being surprised and disconcerted by the reaction which greeted my announcement of the demonstration program and its supporting fund, but not for the reasons advanced in the House by members of the Conservative party. This demonstration program, Mr. Speaker,