

ment could do to help us Canadians with our housing problems would be to leave us alone.

Perhaps I should have suggested they resign.

Disband the bureaucracies, cut taxes, and let us solve our own problems, with the interference of our local or provincial governments it we choose, but without federal interference, without federal bureaucrats taking our money from us in taxes and spending it as they want it spent rather than as we want it spent.

Later in the speech I said this, and I think it still applies:

If it is really our desire to raise the material standard of living of poor people, rather than push them around and run their lives, then we should abandon the government policies that impoverish them. In place of the present mess of welfare schemes and housing schemes, we should give the poor people the cash presently spent on these things and let the poor people spend the cash in the ways that give them the greatest satisfaction. To build our preferred type of housing for the poor people and to hire thousands of bureaucrats to oversee them in these ghettos is wasteful.

That last word describes practically all of the housing proposals of the government. The government continually seems to forget another quote from my speech.

—the state is the great fiction by which everyone tries to live at the expense of everyone else;—

I do not know where it thinks it gets the money to buy houses for people it thinks should have the kind of housing it wants to give them.

—government . . . can destroy but not create, can build nothing of itself but can seize only what others have created;

The only resources at the disposal of the government are our resources. That is a lesson that the government seems to have missed all the way along the line.

Earlier this year there was another attempt by the government to solve the housing problems as it saw them. I do not like to quote myself, but I cannot think of anyone else who says it as well. In the debate on Bill C-46 I said this:

Bill C-46 is another example of the band-aid legislation which has become this government's standard attempt to solve serious national problems.

I have been finding some support for some of these ideas I have been giving to the government because it needs them. In that same speech in January of this year I quoted from an editorial in the *Vancouver Province*. It read:

—our housing difficulties, particularly in the rental field, compose a classic case of problem creation by government.

It continued:

We did not begin to experience real rental shortages in this country until the federal government removed the tax incentives that channelled a lot of private money into rental accommodation.

There are a few rental dwelling units available in this country, but one might be moved to ask why there are so few. The hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) this week asked a question of the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Danson). He invited him to go to Edmonton to explain to the people there why apartments are not being built. He also asked him to visit other centres to give the same explanation. I was astounded at the minister's answer. I of course knew the answer, but I did not think he did. Once he had given the answer, I could not understand how he could carry on with the policies he is proposing. This is what the minister said on Monday of this week, December 1, as recorded at page 9577 of *Hansard*. I quote:

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The reason that apartments are not being built, or starts are down so substantially, is that they cannot be built at today's costs and rent levels without showing a significant loss.

That is what the minister said. He went on to explain how they are planning to overcome the shortage by lending taxpayers' money to other taxpayers so that they will be able to pay less so that somebody will be able to build an apartment at less than market cost and rent it at less than market rent. Any logic that can be had out of that completely escapes me.

My friends to the left think that landlords should be benevolent characters who invest their money in losing propositions. I do not believe that even this government thinks that should be the case. When the minister admits to this House and the country that rental units cannot be built today on a viable economic basis, I say it is time to reassess the basic problems. There is no point putting up these various programs every few months to try to make some band-aid solution work.

When I am asked why there is a shortage of housing in Canada today, I say it is the government's fault. It is not only this government, but it helps. Governments at all levels have to take their responsibility.

I have said this before, but I think it bears repeating. Twenty years ago a builder or homeowner in this country could build a detached house on a single lot with a septic tank, no sewer, on a dirt road with storm ditches. There would be no street lights. Electricity and water, of course, were necessary. As the years went by, the homeowners who were able to get in at a relatively low price were able to put these improvements in their neighbourhoods at a relatively low cost. Because municipal financing was being used, the costs were lower. They were spread over 20 years, or whatever, in the form of local improvement taxes.

● (2050)

The municipal governments then decided they did not want to take all the flak for having high taxes and putting all these services in afterwards, so they found they could convince the developers that all of these wonderful improvements like paved roads, curbs, street lighting, underground wiring, storm and sanitary sewers should be put in by the developers. This solved the problem of the municipal governments whose tax burden was relieved, and before a developer could get approval for a subdivision he had to undertake to put in these services. But who ended up paying for them, Madam Speaker? It was, of course, the purchaser. The developer did not have sufficient credit rating or ability to spread the payments over 20 years, as the municipalities did, so right away the purchaser had to pay, on top of all the other purchase costs, the cost of services.

I should like to say something about rent control, which of course is a provincial matter. I have some information here to which I should like to refer. It is from an article in the *Globe and Mail* last August, before the federal government freeze was brought in, urging that rent control be instituted by the provincial governments. One observation with which I wholly agree is this:

Rents, like other prices, go up because costs go up. There is no magic umbrella to shelter property owners from inflation. If mill rates rise, if fuel prices rise, if the costs of materials, appliances, mortgages, hydro, water and wages all rise as well, how can the rent that is made up of those things stay the same?