

*Supply—National Revenue*

Consolidated Building Corporation, which is involved with the construction of the Richmond Gardens project; but I just wish to relate to the minister some of the complaints I have received and pose some questions to him.

This has to do with the Richmond Gardens housing project in Richmond, B.C., which was built by Consolidated Building Corporation of Toronto. I think the concept is a very good one. They took a large tract of unoccupied land, laid out a fairly good subdivision pattern and built houses which from the exterior are very attractive. They completed the services. I believe the municipality was very well satisfied. However, there have been a considerable number of complaints about the quality of the workmanship and the finish of the houses generally. I wish to bring to the attention of the minister some of these complaints.

I am going to quote from a letter from one of my constituents to the manager of Central Mortgage and Housing of Vancouver. This letter is dated August 22, 1964. I shall not use the person's name, but the corporation of course has some of this correspondence on their file. This letter illustrates the type of complaint I have heard on a number of occasions concerning this particular project which was built under N.H.A. The person protesting had not been making his payments, and the letter concerned that point. Then it says:

I know my agreement with you. I know that it will take 25 years to pay this house. Can you guarantee that it will stand those 25 years?

When I made my agreement with you, I trusted that C.M.H.C. would make five careful inspections of this house, and especially because it is built by government loan.

Am I forced to buy a house where the foundation is completely fractured in three places; where framing is showing the poorest workmanship ever done; where the outside siding is filled with nail holes; insufficient or no overlap, broken and used asbestos shingles, as well as being wavy; where brick facing is loose with cracked base due to building mistakes; where the ceiling is wavy; where the basement floor is cracked all over, etc.

If your "inspectors" passed all these facts, I have not only been misled by C.B.C., but also have a wrong conception of C.M.H.C.

I am sure that this house does not meet N.H.A. minimum standards. It is wasting government money.

This complaint has been looked into by the corporation. There has been correspondence between this person and myself and the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, and between the minister and the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam. The house was to have been completed in December. This person moved

[Mr. Prittie.]

in in February and as late as September, last month, the corporation was still sending inspectors back to check on the workmanship and to see whether certain repairs had been carried out. This is a particular case, but others have come to my attention.

I said that I am not making charges, because I have not had an opportunity to personally inspect a number of these houses built under N.H.A. However, I did have an opportunity during one of my trips home recently to look at the type of row houses which have been built by the same company, but not with N.H.A. money; this was done with private mortgage money. The workmanship which I was shown at these places was very, very poor; the steps were of a very narrow type and the risers were of varying height. There was very poor workmanship on the woodwork generally, on the mouldings, and so on. There was some evidence that this corporation is perhaps not employing competent workmen who can do the work on time and do it well.

This may raise some doubt about the quality of inspections. I do not want to condemn C.M.H.C. inspectors out of hand, but I would ask these questions. Have they the time to do a proper job of inspection? Have they enough inspectors in the lower mainland area, in the Vancouver area, to do the work? If they have not enough inspectors to carry out the type of inspection that should be carried out, what is the reason for this? Are they not offering sufficient salary to get sufficient qualified building inspectors? If they have sufficient inspectors, why should these complaints be coming in? I should also like to ask the corporation, through the minister, to give us some idea of how many complaints they have received about this particular project. Have they investigated all these complaints? Have they found out whether or not they were ill founded? It seems to me that if members have received a great many complaints, surely the corporation has also, and I should like to know what type of investigation has been carried out.

With regard to the particular case I mentioned a few minutes ago, apparently the complaints were valid, because the inspectors made several return trips and the work was still not done satisfactorily. I would also raise this question and ask the minister to answer it. If a building company has developed a record of this type, and apparently because of the type of workmen they are hiring there are too many complaints from prospective or actual buyers. does this make any difference