

*National Housing Act*

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation celebrated the new year by announcing that their rates would be going up from 6.25 to 6.75 per cent, which is a very substantial increase for people in the low income groups wishing to buy a house. For example, it is said that no family should consider spending more than two and a half times its annual income on the purchase of a house. This means that a family with an annual income of \$5,000 a year should pay no more than \$12,500 for a house. Where in our cities can one get a house for \$12,500? The cost of housing has soared out of all proportion which means that an increasing number of people must resort to rental. However, the provision of adequate houses for rental has not been sufficient. In this regard I think the amendment respecting the use of existing houses might also be applied to the rental of homes.

Many of us are not aware of the fact that recently the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development made a study of housing rental in 14 western European and North American countries. The survey was made for the year 1963. They discovered that of the 14 countries surveyed Canadians spent the largest percentage of their income dollar for rent. This means that the cost of rental is at the very peak in this country compared with these other countries. I realize that Canadians enjoy better incomes than citizens of many other countries but I believe that the high percentage of income spent on housing in this country is an unenviable record in view of the high cost of living we have experienced in the last few years.

I should now like to speak on the subject of low rental public housing in my own city of Vancouver. A large percentage of the people in the groups I have enumerated needs more low rental housing than is being provided at the present time. I am glad to see that the minister is in agreement with what I have said because I remember that when he came to our city last January he said, I believe, that there were a million Canadians who were not satisfactorily housed. There are not a million of them in Vancouver but as it is a place which is so well publicized we shall be getting many people from other parts of Canada for whom we shall have to provide good housing.

● (8.30 p.m.)

As I said, not enough has been done to meet housing needs. Let me give you an example involving a group of old age pensioners in my riding in a low rental housing project. This

[Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway).]

project, Killarney Gardens, was not built under Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It was built last spring and has room for 187 pensioners. There was a waiting list of 500 people. This project materialized in a city where there is already considerable low rental housing for elderly people. But only 187 out of a waiting list of 500 people could be accommodated. The same situation can be found all over Vancouver. At the present time I believe Central Mortgage and Housing is exploring in the English Bay district the possibility of building a high-rise apartment block for old age pensioners. I hope the corporation can do this, but land values have gone up so much because of inflated rates in the West End that I should be surprised if a site could be found suitable for a low rental project. Perhaps the minister could tell me about this.

**Mr. Nicholson:** Would the hon. member permit a question? Would she be surprised to know that all lots but one needed for the development of low rental projects in the West End, all but one, have already been acquired?

**Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway):** I am delighted to hear that, and I am sure the old people will be also. We have waited a long time for this.

I want to talk about the four low rental housing projects in Vancouver and a fifth which I believe is in the final stages of completion. Everybody, including the minister, admits that mistakes have been made. They always will be made when we try new things. In these projects people of low income are accommodated. They are mainly recipients of social assistance, from what I can find out. I know that there are many children in the low rental housing projects in Vancouver. Yet the four projects to which I shall refer were built with few, if any, recreational facilities inside or outside. I hope the minister will correct me if I am wrong, but that is the impression I have gained from looking at the projects and from talking to people.

That is not true of the Raymur housing project which is to be finished shortly. It has two-thirds of an acre for a sports field, with benches, and three areas where there is sand in which small children can play. In one of the blocks, the one for old people, there is a lounge, a washroom and a kitchen. In block E, I believe, which is for two-bedroom families, there is one large room and a bathroom as well as kitchen facilities. But in the other four projects built earlier these facilities—