

tations which will be made to him shortly, he will go a long way toward meeting the demands of certain municipalities and we shall solve many of our problems to the ultimate benefit of all Canadians.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, when I heard that the minister to whom we listened this afternoon had assumed the portfolio of urban affairs, I felt a degree of sympathy for him because of the awesome task that he had taken upon himself. The problems of the cities are formidable and growing ever more formidable as time goes on. Problems of unemployment, poverty, housing, pollution, financing, as well as many more, call for Herculean efforts of leadership if there are to be solutions.

As I listened this afternoon to the smooth-flowing discourse of the minister, I realized once again that what this government says and what it does are worlds apart. Indeed, the minister's speech made me realize that the policies of this government are made by comfortable people for comfortable people who delude themselves into thinking that while there may be a few unemployed, sick or handicapped people around, with a little more effort on their part they could join the ranks of the affluent instead of allowing themselves to depend on the taxpayer for social assistance.

The minister waxed lyrical over our urban possibilities and over the opportunity to "create a society of exceptional excellence" in Canada, yet he overlooked the need to take the first urgent steps to that end. One of the most urgent of those is the matter of housing for low-income people in the big cities, although rural areas have also been shamefully neglected. He boasted of what he calls the government's colossal housing program and of the number of housing starts in 1971. I ask, housing starts for whom?

Less than 10 per cent of housing starts in 1971 were for subsidized public housing. That is the only kind of housing the poor can afford. Long lines of them wait patiently for clean, warm shelter while the National Housing Act serves those who are in less need of help. The National Housing Act was supposed to help people on low income. What are the facts, Mr. Speaker? As the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave) said, in 1970 the lowest income third of families borrowing under the National Housing Act amounted to only 5.3 per cent of the total. These were people with incomes of up to \$7,000. So we have a National Housing Act that under this government's policy provides almost 95 per cent of its resources for the service of people with incomes of \$7,000 and over. The other 5 per cent of resources go to those with incomes of under \$7,000. Clearly, the poor get only the crumbs.

The minister may say all he likes about research into housing, new products and new ways of doing things. The fact remains that those on low income are getting the short end of the stick and are very likely to continue doing so. And it is a very short end indeed. The only satisfactory way to provide for the needs of the poor is to provide them with income.

Mr. Speaker, income and options go together. When those who are poor can get income and the means of earning it, they can and will decide on the kind of place in

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which they want to live; and it will not be a high-rise, urban ghetto. There are already far too many of these areas in Canada.

In January of this year a four year-old boy was fatally injured when he fell from a seventh-floor balcony in Toronto. He was still conscious when his mother picked him up. He was crying, "Mummy, Mummy." He died three hours later. That was the seventh time this year a child has fallen from an upper storey window or balcony in metropolitan Toronto. Studies have shown that housewives and children living on the upper floors of high-rise buildings are far more prone to illness, physical and nervous, than those living near the ground.

Meanwhile, until poor people cannot obtain the kind of income that will enable them to get the kind of housing they want, let me urge upon the minister that every sort of public housing ought to provide adequate play-spaces and facilities, both indoor and outside, and that there should be child-care facilities either in the project or in a community centre nearby. The minister knows Vancouver very well. He knows the need is there and he knows it is not being met. I urge him to use the National Housing Act and make the provision of such facilities mandatory.

Mr. Basford: Well, what did we do at Reilly park?

Mrs. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, one swallow does not make a summer, and one raindrop does not make a rain-shower.

Mr. Basford: What about Britannia? We spent half a million dollars there.

Mrs. MacInnis: Did the minister mention Raymer?

Mr. Basford: Britannia.

Mrs. MacInnis: Because if he did, let me remind him that the people there had to fight like fury to make sure their children were able to go to school without the danger of being run over by trains on the way.

An hon. Member: The government is still crowding people into ghettos.

Mrs. MacInnis: I suggest that the minister explore the possibility of introducing a number of low-income families into co-operative housing developments, such as is being done now in the De Cosmos village co-operative project in the Vancouver area. Let them enjoy the fresh air and decent surroundings of such a project. The low-income families that went to the De Cosmos village project were very happy over the prospect. Actually, they were overjoyed at being able to get away from the stigma that is attached to the residents of ordinary low-rent projects.

Every report we get from every committee and authority concerned with urban problems stresses the need of adequate income for those who are poor. Enough income means a chance to live in modern, well planned neighbourhoods, a chance to get away from the heavily congested core areas and a chance to give their children an opportunity to associate with other children free from the stigma of poverty and insecurity. And, Mr. Speaker, that is a very real stigma in the minds of people receiving social assistance or on low income.