

As a result of the housing shortage, we have an opportunity to achieve another social objective. We can concentrate on the development of new homes away from the big cities. By building them around smaller existing communities, we will take the pressure off the big cities. This would not only have the beneficial effect of redistribution of the population across this country and away from our major cities which are now too large, but also in terms of quality of life.

Many seem to think that land banking is a solution to our housing problems. I do not agree. I do not think that land banking, at least what I have heard about it, is a very positive step forward. What frightens me is that the large cities like Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver will take advantage of it. They will buy all the land around them. By the way, this land has already been bought by speculators. What are we going to do, buy it back and give them a high profit or go beyond that area and bank the land? All we will do is drive up the price of land and the concentration of people more and more into the large metropolitan areas. I think if land banking is any kind of solution, we must attach to it the rider that it is really primarily designed to enable small municipalities to find land immediately around their outskirts for housing needs, and prohibit such land being tied up by the speculator and developer.

● (1250)

I have talked about land costs and I could go on and on, but the second component in the price of housing is building costs. Building costs have risen, but they are not unmanageable. The point I want to address myself to at the moment is the real hidden cost which is not understood by too many people in this country. I refer to impost costs, costs levied on builders and on individuals who want to build a home in a municipality.

To give an example of these hidden taxes, if you want to build a home in the largest city in my area, then without adding the cost of servicing and roads within the site, and so on, the cost, exclusive of acquisition of land, servicing costs and carrying charges on the land, is approximately \$4,000 per unit. Municipal authorities and the provinces all declare that the cost of housing is too high, yet they themselves are charging \$4,000 before you can even dig a hole in the ground. And you still have to pay for services. It seems to me that that sort of cost must become much more reasonable. For every one bedroom apartment in an apartment building in that municipality you pay \$1,200 in the form of impost costs, which is a direct tax, without including cost of services. In the second largest community in my area the impost cost is \$2,711 per lot, and I could go on and on.

It seems to me that when you take into account the impost cost at the municipal level, regional costs in our particular area of regional government, and over and above that the amount of bureaucratic red tape you have to wade through before you can get approval, you have an awful mess when you add them all together. That is the kind of thing we have to face. It is no solution to come forward and say we should subsidize interest rates, provide more money, and do a lot of other things. What we must do is to cut down the price of a house, and one place to start is right here.

The Address—Mr. Cafik

I do not think it is fair or reasonable for a municipality to put the entire tax burden for all services extraneous to the site directly on to the shoulders of a handful of people who are trying to buy a new house in that municipality.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): They do not, not the whole load.

Mr. Cafik: They put on a good part of it.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Well, that is different from saying the whole load.

Mr. Cafik: I do not think it is reasonable to put the whole of this impost cost on their shoulders.

I think we have also to give consideration to package sewage plants, upstream sewage plants and so on, so as to cut down costs. We should also open up more serviced land where it is needed. In addition to that, I think we need, on an urgent basis, to conduct a great deal of research into ways of disposing of sewage by electrolysis.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member's time has expired.

Mr. Cafik: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether I may have permission to go on till one o'clock.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Cafik: I think if we do the right amount of research, since we were able to put people on the moon, it will be possible for us to develop better ways of treating sewage, such as treating it on the site rather than through centralized sewage disposal units. This is a far better way of treating sewage from an environmental standpoint.

We need a real sense of urgent priority on the part of all levels of government in order to grapple with the problems to which I have only briefly alluded this morning. There is no doubt there are literally of hundreds of thousands of people in this country who are now paying more than they can afford for a home. I do not know how we will solve this problem, but we as a federal government, in conjunction with the other levels of government, ought to do what we can to see that the situation is corrected rather than aggravated.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the first and following sessions of the thirtieth parliament in the hope and expectation that we as a body will be able to provide some kind of leadership to the other levels of government in Canada in order to see that we cope with the housing problem in an effective way and overcome one of the very great and burdensome social evils of our time, namely the excessive cost of a home for Canadians.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the hon. member would permit a question before one o'clock?

Mr. Cafik: Certainly.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): I thank the hon. member. I must say at the outset that I completely agree with much of what the hon. member said, but in terms of the responsibility of the federal government is he aware