

the building codes in most Canadian municipalities today are either modelled on the National Building Code, or are, in fact, precisely the National Building Code. I cannot imagine that municipal governments would want to lower the standards which, after many years of very careful evaluation by competent engineers, architects and construction people, have been incorporated in the National Building Code. It would be a backward step were they to do so. There may be some local rigidities that have crept in, but, by and large, municipal building standards across the country have been raised to a much higher standard than hitherto and municipal governments would view with concern any suggestion that they should be seriously modified.

So far as zoning ordinances are concerned, here, again, municipal governments have been endeavouring, in the interest of the total community, to hold the line with respect to the improved zoning standards that they have been able to achieve. Poor zoning, or the lack of it in the past, has led to great abuse in land usage and it will take a long time to correct some of the bad usage which is now on the land. On balance, municipal governments are reasonable and where it can be demonstrated that, in fact, a local zoning ordinance is prejudicial to some desirable housing development, modifications can be arrived at.

Municipal governments share the views expressed by earlier witnesses with respect to the need for producing low-cost housing that will be within the ability of low-income families to afford. But they would be opposed to achieving a low-cost house at the price of lowering the minimum standards which have been built up. It is not true that a house built today is built merely for this generation. The fact is that it will serve well beyond this generation. We must be mindful, therefore, both with respect to the site location of low-cost housing, its design and its component building materials, that it will be so conceived and constructed that in fact when it is completed it will be something more than merely the incipient beginning of a future slum.

We have covered a lot of the waterfront without examining in too great detail the municipal position with respect to the continuing housing problem. Suffice it to say that the municipal governments have a very great interest in the problem, particularly with respect to low-cost and low-rental housing where the greatest gap in the national housing program has been. In large cities particularly there is need for low-cost and low-rental housing. The migratory nature of employment in large cities creates a problem. The fact that a man is employed in one area of the city one day and next week is employed miles away on the other side of the city adds to the problem. The fact that you have a heavy concentration of low-income workers in large cities aggravates the problem.

For those and other reasons the municipal governments would like to see low-rental housing and they would like, moreover, to be getting on with the job of slum clearance and urban renewal. The desire is there, the means to do it are not.

Back in February a delegation from the Federation met with Prime Minister Diefenbaker. Among the things discussed was the whole matter of housing. A submission was left with the Prime Minister and we can do no better today than to quote from that section of it dealing with the matters now under consideration by the Senate Committee.

In brief, the Federation memorandum called upon the Federal Government to extend its participation in low-rental housing and urban renewal projects under the National Housing Act by substantially increasing its share of the cost of clearing blighted sub-standard areas. It moreover asked that the municipality's share of such costs be advanced to the municipalities to be repayable by them over a period of years. Finally, it asked that the cost of