

National Housing Act

wanted homes. I would repeat that, because of the reasons I gave the other day; but there are these people in the country today who do need homes. Whether they are communal homes of some kind, or individual homes, such as we build in New Westminster, or apartments of some sort, the senior citizens and the needy of this country require a cheaper house.

On Monday, when I spoke to the resolution, I quoted from an editorial in the *Vancouver Province*. I did not use the whole of the editorial because I did not think it was particularly necessary. I felt that the minister was quite familiar with the situation and would probably make some comment on the substance that was proposed, but I do wish to quote from another part of the editorial, for it bears out something I said the other day and I believe it should be taken note of. It is this:

The solution to their problem, it seems to us, is not principally a financial one, for mortgage terms have to be realistic and these people are not asking for a subsidy from the public purse. It will be found, rather, in the encouragement of new methods of construction.

We have to find new methods of constructing homes. There must be other ways whereby we can build a home that is going to cost less than \$10,000, \$15,000 or \$20,000. Certainly when we have a society that is capable of doing so we should be able to find responsible bodies that are willing and prepared to do so.

In the course of the discussion the other day I also raised the question of fire hazards in homes. I did not deal with that question to any great extent then, but it is my intention to spend some time on it now by reason of the fact that I should like to point out to the minister that I do not believe there is a citizen of this country who is not fully aware of the fire hazards that face us today. I have had communication with one of my constituents who first drew the question to my attention.

In order to show you how these people think and the terms in which they are thinking—and you may rest assured that this man is not alone in his views—I should like to put on record what he had to say. The letter is not too long and it is my intention to read it, because I think it is something with which every member of the house should be thoroughly familiar.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I am very sorry to rise at this juncture but may I point out that I do not think a discussion of fire hazards actually is entirely relevant to the bill under discussion. I realize that several members in the course of their remarks have referred in passing to the fire

hazard in connection with housing. I do not wish to be unduly harsh with the hon. member who has the floor, but he has indicated he intends to spend a certain amount of time on fire hazards, and I think if he does so he will be departing from the principle of the bill.

Mr. Hahn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate your statement very much. I shall not read the letter. Instead, I will draw the attention of the minister to this fact, that the legislation does cover the renovation of houses and there are certain conditions that have to be taken care of. One of them has to do with the fire hazard. The fire hazard must be taken very careful note of.

I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that you find it is improper for me to read this missive, but I may refer to a graph this man has prepared as the result of certain questions he had me put on the order paper so he could get a true picture of the fire situation in Canada today. I may say that this honourable gentleman—I believe I can say he is honourable—has taken it upon himself to show how fires have increased. He has tried to analyse the statistics and has come to the only possible conclusion, that these fires have occurred as a result of the faulty construction in our homes today.

For instance, he takes each of the various provinces and his graph shows explicitly that the fire hazard in this country remained at a fairly constant level from 1926 to 1937. From 1937 on the number of fires in each province mounted. The reason for that was that people who built homes during the depression did not have sufficient finances available to put proper equipment in them, and today that equipment must be changed. The electrical equipment, outlets and other wiring, were of such a nature that they were not heavy enough to carry the load. Let me quote some of the figures I have here. We find an increase in all Canada from approximately 13 deaths per million to a maximum of 40 deaths per million in the years 1951 and 1952.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Again I am sorry to rise but I really feel, having heard the hon. member for several minutes now, that he is directing his attention to fire hazards and fire protection, whereas we should be directing our attention to the principle of the bill which, as the hon. member can readily see, deals with amendments to the National Housing Act. I hope the hon. member will co-operate with me in dwelling more particularly on the principle of the bill.

Mr. Hahn: With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, I know I am not supposed to refer at this stage to the clauses of the bill but