

Housing

The answer in this reply was "\$450" per month. He continued:

We can't buy school supplies for our four children.

This is not opposition rhetoric; it is written in black and white on the questionnaire. Another person indicated:

We renewed last June at 18.5 up from an 11.75 per cent mortgage we had. Feel banks are totally irresponsible and greedy. Whatever happened to 25-year terms, instead of this headache every one, three or five years.

I ask the minister, whatever happened to 25-year terms? The reply continued:

I think the government will see a "little peoples" revolt soon over this. These high rates are forcing mothers back to work and I feel it's a main contributing factor in the breakdown of the family unit. Let's see 12 or 13 per cent mortgages again! The high fuel costs are very frustrating . . . Hang in there—

Another person said:

How can our so-called leaders, whom we have elected, tolerate this ridiculous situation where banks are allowed to reap their enormous profits and we the people . . . lose our homes. We must be fools to tolerate this—

Another one indicated:

As a single parent, I feel trapped. I'm sick of hearing about home owners when a lot of us are stuck paying rent seemingly forever and can't even save.

This single parent went on to indicate the difficulties in renting. Another constituent indicated:

Next increase we won't be under rent controls.

We must remember that the minister has been going around the country attempting to get people out of rent controls. This person went on to indicate:

I think the price limit for rent controls needs to be raised—nearly everyone must have outgrown it by now, soon we'll all be at the landlords' mercy! How can any of us have a sense of security or plan for the future?

Another questionnaire indicated that the writers had shared their house with another couple for six months and finally were able to instal, although admittedly illegal, a suite downstairs in order to meet the huge increase in payments. It went on to indicate that the renovations were costly, and without the benefit of personal family loans would have necessitated a second mortgage. What about people who cannot instal suites or do not have families to help them? They also indicated that their increase was from \$452 to \$809, and there was a notation that it amounted to 50 per cent of their monthly wage.

This is not opposition rhetoric; the minister cannot dismiss it. These are direct quotations of the people. Another indicated that he had been renting his present home since the summer and that he had had no rent increases. He said that it was very difficult procuring his place with two small children and one cat, but that he was one of the lucky ones who found a place in which to live. He said, "The housing situation—words are inadequate; let us see some action". One couple indicated that they owned their own home and that their 25-year mortgage was finished at last, but that their children would be seeking homes or rental units in the near future and thus they knew that high interest rates are a serious problem about which something must be done.

Another concern was expressed that with high mortgage rates their three sons have no hope of owning homes. Another person indicated that he purchased a one-bedroom apartment approximately 18 months ago with a payment of \$290 per

month. He indicated that with his renewal for one year his payment went to \$540 per month in December and he was told the mortgage would go to over \$800 per month. This person also has to pay \$100 per month for the manager's fee which has risen, but his wages have never risen to cover such high mortgage costs.

Someone suggested that if economists started making more hopeful predictions they could have a psychological effect upon the public. Another couple indicated that their payment would have increased by \$150 if it had not been for a family friend who owed them some money, but that they knew of other people who were in trouble. Another person indicated that he found it absurd, although he had few debts and could qualify for a large mortgage, that he could not meet the monthly payments and thus could not purchase a home. He asked, "What are you going to do for me aside from raising taxes and decreasing deductions?" There is great cynicism out there about politicians, as well as about political and government processes.

Someone else indicated that he lived in co-operative housing, which is the answer to affordable housing for both the young and middle-aged. Another letter on co-operative housing indicated that the writer would like to see lower interest rates and more co-ops for people on lower incomes. Another indicated that he wished the Liberals would unplug their ears and listen carefully to the problems facing the Canadian economy today and deal with them accordingly. Another constituent indicated that he would like very much to own his own home but doubted he ever would because of high interest rates. A couple indicated that they rented because they could not afford to purchase and that these usurious rates must be reduced soon by whatever means necessary. The final questionnaire to which I will refer indicated that something must be done about interest rates. This couple wanted to purchase a home but could not because of interest rates. They said, "Help, do something!"

These were comments of people in my riding which I think display a pattern. I should like to sum them up by referring to the pattern and inviting the minister to listen. The first point is that clearly there are increases in costs and people are paying more for housing. I suppose this is obvious, but these questionnaires give exact details of the increases. I would be glad to provide the minister with these questionnaires after my speech, but first let me indicate that people are continuing to rent because they cannot afford home ownership.

I should like to refer to the statistics about which people are unaware. The average family income in British Columbia is \$29,639, which is fairly high when compared with some other parts of the country. If one takes 25 per cent of that income, \$617.48 a month is the affordable amount for shelter. If you assume a payment of 25 per cent of the income, ignore all costs of ownership and taxes and assume a 16 per cent mortgage interest rate, which is on the low scale, people can buy a home valued at \$46,780. But there are no houses in Vancouver for