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\$40,000? No, it was a program directed to low-income earners, individuals on pensions and various fixed incomes.

The example I will provide for the House today is a rather telling story of what the Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has done in his own native Province of Nova Scotia. The officials of his Department will tell you that there has never been a program of the federal Government under Canada Mortgage and Housing which has been more successful for those in need than the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program, for both urban and rural communities across Atlantic Canada. However, nowhere has that program been more successful than in Nova Scotia.

The Government ought to be ashamed of its record on the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program. As a Nova Scotian and one of the political Ministers from Nova Scotia, the Minister responsible should be ashamed. He should be even more ashamed that he has substantially cut the budgets under the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program.

For example, I do not know why a Member of Parliament representing Halifax would have it in for the people of New Glasgow, but the budget for that particular municipality has been cut back since 1987 from \$207,000. The forecast budget for 1988 is \$126,000. This program does not throw money away. It is needed by many Canadians. In fact, this program provides provisional financial assistance to those in need, extends the life of existing housing stocks, promotes the acceptable level of maintenance of such stocks, and improves substandard housing to an agreed upon level of health and safety standards.

Those are the over-all objectives of the program. Yet, the political Minister from Nova Scotia is telling municipalities which need this money to improve their housing stocks that he is sorry but the Government is not going to provide that financial assistance to low income earners or people on fixed incomes.

It does not stop at New Glasgow. I do not know why the Minister from Halifax would have it in for the people of Pictou but the reduction there is from \$113,000 in 1987 to \$67,000 in 1988. The Town of Truro is a great community with an enthusiastic population. Its budget in 1987 was only \$207,000, but in 1988 the Minister from Halifax reduced that to \$126,000.

There are many similarities between the Town of Springhill and the area which I represent. In 1987 it was allotted \$198,000 and the initial budget forecast for 1988 indicates \$123,000. Granted, the Town of Amherst does not have the numerous restaurants or the convention centre which Halifax has, but it does have its share of low income Canadians and Canadians on fixed incomes who are in need of upgrading their housing. Their budget has been reduced from \$293,000 in 1987 to \$185,000.

This is a wonderful political Minister from Nova Scotia. He is doing a phenomenal job for low income Canadians and

people on fixed incomes in the Province of Nova Scotia. He should do the honourable thing and ask for a change of portfolio. This is a shameful performance.

What about the area which I represent and Cape Breton Island as a whole? I repeat, for the benefit of Members who are present as well as those who are watching on television, that this particular program is needed on Cape Breton Island. In 1984 the previous Liberal Government provided the municipal units on Cape Breton Island approximately \$6,763,460, almost \$7 million. Now, under a Conservative Government in Nova Scotia, a Conservative Government in Ottawa, the political Minister from Nova Scotia has told the people in Cape Breton that for 1988 they will be allocated only \$1.7 million.

There is a tremendous need, Mr. Speaker. There is a backlog of applications from low income Canadians and Canadians on fixed incomes in that area of the country who need this assistance in order to improve their housing stock. The Conservative Government and the political Minister from Nova Scotia have cut, cut, cut to an all-time high.

What has the Member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso (Mr. O'Neil) said to low-income Canadians and people on fixed incomes who want assistance under this particular program? He has said nothing. He has demonstrated that both he and the political Minister do not have the will or foresight to secure the necessary funds from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) in order to provide those Canadians with financial assistance to make the repairs which are absolutely necessary. My colleague, the Member for Egmont (Mr. Henderson) has said that his constituents will deal with him in the next election.

The City of Sydney was allocated \$563,000 in 1987. That has been decreased by 16 per cent to \$350,000 in 1988. That is utterly shameful.

Richmond County, which is represented partly by the Member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso and partly by myself, has had its budget slashed by 17 per cent from 1987 to 1988. In Cape Breton County in excess of 1,000 applicants are seeking money under this program and they have been slashed by 17 per cent as well, down from \$763,000 in 1987 to \$447,000 in 1988.

• (1740)

The list goes on and on in terms of the cut-back on a program that has been exceptionally successful. It was successful because it focused on people on pension and low income Canadians. These are people unlike the Minister, who makes in excess of \$100,000, but make from \$10,000 to \$13,000 a year. They are not your Texaco president or Royal Bank president.

These are average Canadians trying to get along in their daily life, and it would be so much easier with a little assistance from the Government of Canada. Yet they are being told