

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see that you have recognized that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) really has no point of order in his intervention. Indeed, what he has just said is that he does not want me to reflect on the vote that has just been cast. Indeed, I do not want to reflect on it. They lost the time of the House this afternoon and they lost the vote too.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ouellet: What is important is that the House was supposed to start discussing an important measure that will allow the possibility of having more housing for the low income people of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ouellet: It is a piece of legislation that will allow the hundreds and hundreds of municipalities across Canada to have appropriate financing under a federal-provincial scheme that has been agreed upon. They are waiting for the Conservative party to finally allow this bill to be approved by parliament.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I was observing what was going on in the House this afternoon at 4.30 before the vote. I want to tell the people who are watching us on television, and who obviously could not see which members were in the House during the call of the bell, that the Liberals were ready to vote from the start.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I think the minister is really getting away from the topic and that his remarks deal with the vote, which cannot be debated, just as I thought the issue raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition a bit premature since the minister had perhaps not gone so far as the Leader of the Opposition maintained. Also, his remarks do not concern the bill before us, and I would like him to go back to the issue at hand.

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that in its most important aspects this bill implements the new orientation the Canadian government intends to give housing. That orientation is being adopted as a result of the meetings I have held with my provincial colleagues; together, as ministers responsible for housing in Canada, we formulated this new policy. However, Mr. Speaker, I deplore the fact that we should have failed to get from the Opposition, and in particular the Progressive Conservative party, more co-operation and collaboration in adopting this bill posthaste.

An hon. Member: They wasted the time of the House.

Mr. Ouellet: Naturally, we should have liked to have passed this bill in a single day, to have seen it through all its stages; because of the urgency of implementing the program, the bill should have been passed in one day. We were unable to get the

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co-operation of the Progressive Conservative party in order to do so; in addition they insisted today on wasting the time of the House of Commons, which is another example of the lack of co-operation, the irresponsibility of the Tories.

This afternoon, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) behaved like a kid bent on playing hooky. It is obvious he does not have the sense of responsibility one needs to take on the heaviest responsibilities in the land.

An hon. Member: He lacks leadership!

Mr. Ouellet: That man has neither the maturity nor the training to hope to become Prime Minister, and his attitude in the House today proved it clearly.

The provisions in this bill, Mr. Speaker, address specifically great national objectives, the first of which is probably the most important, namely a considerable increase in the number of housing units that meet the needs of Canadians with the lowest incomes.

[English]

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Why don't you call a judge?

[Translation]

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, I have just heard the unpleasant innuendo made towards me by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker). That is a typical example of the rubbish he constantly mouths and it clearly reveals the baseness of that member who periodically in the House shows his spite towards other members of the House. To me, he appears to be someone who is totally lacking in parliamentary manners, who behaves in a deplorable manner; I regret this sort of allusion and, Mr. Speaker, I find it is simply disgusting.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to continue my remarks on this bill because I think that beyond the partisan spite of some of the members of the Conservative opposition, there are some objectives and important ideals which enable us to continue our work as parliamentarians and allow us above all to hope that we can settle important problems, particularly those in the field of housing. Our present housing programs, which are undertaken in conjunction with the provincial governments, hardly provide at the moment 19,000 units a year; it is not enough to meet the needs of the country. It is obvious that we must build each year a greater number of units for old and low income people.

That is why the government of Canada undertook to go ahead with a program to speed up housing construction by asking for the co-operation of the provinces, the co-operation of municipal authorities and also the co-operation of all private and public organizations involved in public housing. We set a target of 30,000 housing units a year and I am convinced the new measures proposed in this bill will enable us to reach that target rapidly.