

*National Housing Act*

ously had not talked to the chief representative of the Conservative party from the province of Quebec.

Before the election I was in St. Hilaire, and I saw what was going on there. I was very proud of it. Excellent housing was being built in St. Hilaire at low cost, as was the case in Quebec City also. Instead of painting such a dark picture all the time, I would like to see members of the Official Opposition come up with some specific and positive suggestions, if they have any. However, I found this particular speech completely barren.

I want to make one other point. A couple of weeks ago I was invited to a social function of an association of home builders. My wife and I were taken by a very significant fact, namely, that almost all the participants were very young people, people in their late twenties and early thirties, who were home owners. I might say that they came from an area near Montreal, Pierrefonds, where quality homes are being built on a massive scale which these people can obviously afford, and in which they enjoy living.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, may I ask everybody interested in this subject to take the trouble to read the pamphlets and literature that are put out by the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Basford). I find them easy to read. They clearly spell out what he is trying to achieve. I strongly recommend them to all people who have an interest in what the government is trying to do for the low income families in this country—assisted home ownership, non-profit housing corporations, residential rehabilitation, and neighbourhood improvement—all slanted to the low income level. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of this legislation and I have no hesitation in giving it my 100 per cent support.

**Mr. Don Blenkarn (Peel South):** Mr. Speaker, I was most pleased to hear the remarks of the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert), and was glad that he threw this side a challenge. I hope he will listen to this debate to learn the philosophy of this party, and to understand the debacle in the housing field that the minister and the government have pushed down the throats of Canadians, without any regard to how Canadians want to live and are entitled to live.

The philosophy of this party was set out by the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams). It is that every family should be able to own a home, or at least have an equity in a home, where there is a backyard. And where possible that home should be a single family home, or a semi-detached home, or at the very least a townhouse. It is about time we looked after people properly, and not in the way that some socialistic democratic Liberal party would want them looked after. It is the inalienable right of a family with children to be able, if they desire, to own their own land and their own home. You will not find this party talking about leases forever, with the chance that you never can own anything in Canada. It is important for our children to have grass in the backyard, to be able to reach down and touch the earth as they grow up, to say "This land is ours—this Canada is ours". The philosophy of this minister has been such that this has been denied many people. To some extent, the philosophy of this minister, put forward to this House last Monday, was the concept that if you are poor that is it.

• (1420)

I am going to talk about how many people are going to be poor very soon as a result of the actions of this minister. The hon. member for Calgary North mentioned the fact that only 4 per cent of families in metropolitan Toronto could afford to buy a new house. I suppose the rest are poor. I have talked to young families with incomes up to \$14,000 a year who are without a hope of ever getting a home of their own. What does the minister offer? "We will let you live with the landlord if he provides apartments and multi-units, and if 25 per cent of them are rented to poor families we will provide even larger subsidies". This government and my friends to the left are in favour of more high-rise buildings, more crowding, no backyards for kids and to some extent that is what this bill promises.

The approach in this bill has been described by others, and I am going to repeat it, as a band-aid approach from a band-aid minister from a band-aid government. In January, when that famous housing conference was held, that was the comment made by the ministers from Nova Scotia, from Alberta, Ontario, the member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) and the member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert), from the province of Quebec. We did not hear that before, either. It is the complete lack of policy, the lack of drive and purpose and the enormous lack of leadership that categorizes this government and condemns a greater number of people to live in high-rise apartments with smelly corridors and condemns a great many more children to learn to ride their trikes in high-rise apartments or to learn to play in those zoos they call playgrounds behind the Central Mortgage authorized apartment developments.

We have not heard anything about the enormous cost and problem of inter-urban transit. The hon. member for York Simcoe (Mr. Stevens) will be speaking on this subject later. In metropolitan Toronto, Mr. Speaker, ten railway lines ran out from the city but only one—possibly two if you can call the other a railway line—is being used for inter-urban transit. Even that is only possible because the province of Ontario is prepared to pay the CNR a profit so that the city can have some commuter service. They get little if any, help from this government.

It has been clear, Mr. Speaker, that in almost every situation the lack of serviced land is responsible for high costs. Because of a number of factors, the cost of serviced land in metropolitan Toronto has risen from about \$4,000 in 1958 to \$19,000 in 1972, and I am told that this year it will cost between \$22,000 and \$24,000. This price rise has effectively denied home ownership to all but about 4 per cent of wage earners, those who earn over \$16,600 per annum. I say to the hon. member for Vaudreuil that if he were unfortunate enough to have to move to Mississauga his emolument as a member of this House of Commons would hardly enable him to buy a home.

Some people, including the present minister have taken the position that speculative holdings by large corporations have created a monopoly in land ownership and that this is the problem. In my experience, Mr. Speaker, this argument is totally without reason. Any land holder in and around metropolitan Toronto, including every major developer, has plan after plan filed with the municipalities and the province which for one reason or other have