

● (1540)

There is no relief in the area of taxation. The minister laughed at the idea of bureaucratic red tape, but I suggest that bureaucratic red tape at various levels of government and in various agencies has discouraged both developers and individual prospective homeowners. There are restrictions upon restrictions, regulations are compounded until the procedures appear so complicated and are so time consuming that many say it is not worth it and give up in disgust and despair.

The cost and shortage of available land in British Columbia is making it impossible to construct housing. It is hard for citizens to secure adequate accommodation either through purchase or rent to house themselves and their families.

There are restrictions on federal programs. I want to read into the record a section from a letter I received. I spoke about the minister's statement that red tape does not cause any problem. Let me read from a letter which I received regarding an application that was made, in which it is stated that not only were these people discouraged from proceeding with that type of development, but subsequently they were denied approval by CMHC although the municipality was favourable and receptive to the overall development.

The minister can be overwhelmed by the exuberance of his verbosity, but that will not solve the problem nor will it meet this particular situation where the restrictions and the red tape surrounding the operations of CMHC and other programs are such that people are getting tired, and are giving up because of the confusion that is caused and the time that is consumed in trying to get programs through. I could go into all the details of some of the restrictions, but I will not because they have been described at other times.

The ceiling on available mortgages is too low on a regional basis, and in some cases the divisions between the regions are so arbitrary as to be—I was going to say stupid but I have been told I should not use that word—ridiculous. They are completely out of line. I believe CMHC should look at this matter and ensure that the ceilings are adequate to meet the needs of the areas. For instance, a young couple were trying to build their house in Winnipeg. I believe that the ceiling at that time was raised a little to about \$33,000. A lot was being leased from an organization and CMHC insisted on placing a value on that lot of \$15,000 and then expecting the couple to go ahead and build a house under the ceiling of \$33,000. I say that this is true all across the country.

Another difficulty is that CMHC insists on a fixed rate rather than a floating rate. There is another letter which I received from which I would like to read. It is stated in it that trust companies and banks are experiencing difficulty in getting insured loans through CMHC because of the fact that they do not accept a floating take out rate; they want a firm rate.

These are all restrictions that are hindering the realization of the objective of having suitable housing for all the citizens of Canada. To cap it all, the minister says that he has been pouring money into this program. It seems that he has been pouring that money without limit, according

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to him. Yet the fact remains that developers and individuals are finding it absolutely impossible to get money today.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Patterson: I did state that I would not charge the minister with lack of sympathy or sympathetic consideration, but I certainly question the statements he has made. Most of what he said is just talk, and there is not too much effective action in dealing with the serious problems facing Canada.

Mrs. Ursula Appolloni (York South): Madam Speaker, there is a story that goes around about a number of multi-national students who were asked to write an essay on the general theme of an elephant. The British students decided to write about the elephant in its role as a vehicle of transportation in the British Empire. The French students decided to write about the elephant and its sex life. The students from the United States decided to write about the elephant and its market value. But when it came to the Canadian student, he entitled his essay "The elephant—is it a matter of federal, provincial or municipal responsibility?" I suggest that perhaps the same thing could well apply to housing.

I notice the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) in speaking to her motion referred in particular to access to decent housing at prices that Canadian people can afford today. The hon. member knows better than I do that a large part of the cost of housing is in the price of serviced land. In speaking about Ontario I will refer in particular to Toronto because it is the city I know best. The average price of a fully serviced single family lot in Toronto is \$20,211. What are we going to do about that? When we ask our provincial government, we find that on May 15, 1975, Bill 125 was finally passed. That is a bill dealing with land speculation. It was made retroactive to April 9, 1974.

We all know the political hue of the Ontario government which has projected a revenue of \$25 million, but so far it has only received less than \$1 million. I wonder what happened. On checking, we found that there is something known as ministerial discretion. The minister in Ontario is very anxious not to "create hardship," and therefore he uses his discretion in pointing out who is a land speculator. What is the definition of a land speculator?

We find also that his department accepts affidavits as to the worth of land. It is terribly touching and heart warming to find the Conservatives so sweet and trusting. They have no knowledge of the exact value of the land; they accept affidavits.

We then go on to the purchase of land by the provincial government. That in itself is a very good thing; I am not knocking it, but I believe the provincial government of Ontario is irresponsible in its purchase of land for housing.

In south Milton, just outside Toronto, three corporations—Cedar Heights Construction Limited, Loring Developments and Bonny Don Corporation—all having the same president, purchased seven parcels of land from farmers in February of 1975, and one month later sold them to the provincial government for a profit of approxi-