

In this respect the province has seen completion of over 1,700 such units which have been financed under this program. There have been 500 odd projects to repair existing housing, and another 1,000 emergency type repairs made to existing housing units in my province, all designed to meet a specific need. So, good efforts have been made by the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, his colleagues, and CMHC.

The same can be said of the government of Saskatchewan. Jointly the province has participated in the program, though there is still a great distance to go in meeting the housing needs of native people in the province, particularly in the northern reaches of Saskatchewan. So far as urban centres are concerned, we find more and more people off reserves heading to the cities, leaving behind them perhaps better housing than they will be able to find in those cities.

● (1642)

I should like to make another comment of a general nature in response to the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling). Like him, I receive many complaints about housing and the high rates of interest with the resultant large payments required on even a modest dwelling. Other problems are the cost to the smaller urban municipalities of providing serviced lots—paving, water, and sewers are particular problems for some of the smaller communities. The Municipal Incentive Grants Program, devised and developed by the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, has been helpful, but I am sure it could go further. As with any of these programs the problem is in finding the money to put them in place rapidly enough.

Comments were made this afternoon and in yesterday's debate about the insulation program. If every house in the country were eligible for assistance I am sure we would be faced with a shortage of supplies and of workmen. In Saskatchewan we are already having difficulty finding the supplies to meet the demand, and if these were further grants or programs of this kind, industry would not be able to meet the demand.

I should like to conclude by referring to the efforts of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) to implement the recommendations of the Hall Royal Commission on Transportation. That commission was established two years ago to look into the problems of the 5,000 or 6,000 miles of rail lines on the prairies. It reported in May, and since then steps have been taken to implement the major recommendations. One major step of which we see evidence all across the prairies is the federal government's contribution of \$100 million for rail line rehabilitation. Branch lines which were allowed to deteriorate over the years are being rebuilt.

In Saskatchewan we see newspaper headlines such as the one in the *Wilkie Press* which says, "\$880,000 Program for Upgrading CPR Lines in the Wilkie Area." Another one appeared in the *Lloydminster Times* which serves both Alberta and Saskatchewan, "\$1.62 Million Project to Upgrade Rail Lines Going East and West Out of Lloydminster." There are tremendous developments in the rehabilitation of rail lines and

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there are many other steps which will serve to review the question of good, efficient rail service in western Canada, and which are designed to make the best use of energy in terms of how far it is advisable to truck grain, how far to move it by rail, and so on.

We are moving quickly to implement the Hall Commission Report. This is only one example of vast and immediate action by the government to meet the needs of the country.

I want to urge the government, the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, the Minister of Transport and others who are involved in departments and programs which directly affect the subject under debate, to continue developing positive programs to increase and improve the supply of good housing. We are about top of the list in the world. Let us keep it that way, and continue to meet the needs of Canadians who are still looking for better housing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, I speak so often on the late show that I see I have been left seven minutes.

First of all I want to compliment my colleague, the hon. member for Ottawa-Carleton (Mrs. Pigott), for bringing in such a timely and worth-while motion condemning the government for failure to meet the critical need for housing. This is a topic that everybody knows is a serious one.

I should like to put two quotations on the record, Mr. Speaker, the first from the Poverty Task Force, Division of Mission in Canada, The United Church of Canada. In their conclusions appears the following:

There can be no doubt that housing remains a cause of anxiety, discomfort, and social tension in Canada.

They go on to say:

A housing policy should be based firmly on widespread good will between jurisdictions, in which all jurisdictions accept, without apology, the ongoing necessity for government policies, initiatives, participation and supervision directed at the expansion of social housing.

The report concludes with the following statement:

The jurisdictional fences must be broken down. We call on all levels of government to put the low income public at the centre of the housing concern, and to create properly budgeted, long-range social housing programs across Canada.

We seem to have forgotten that poverty exists in Canada. Ten years ago 5 million of our population were living at the poverty level, as pointed out in the Fifth Annual Report of the Economic Council of Canada. There has been a white paper on income security, a working paper on social security, a Senate committee on poverty, and a three-year federal-provincial social security review since then, yet 5 million people are still living in poverty.

I think the minister was quoting a speech made by Mr. R. V. Hession, the president of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, made to the Conference Board on September 22 when he spoke about the number of people who had no toilets, wash basins, plumbing or insulation, and gave the figure of 5