

*Housing*

hon. member did not deal with the other social problems, and he said so. He wanted to focus on the serious housing problem which native people have. However, when I heard the Minister of State for Urban Affairs speak this afternoon I could only ascribe three adjectives to his address. The first is "condescending"—condescending to the native people, condescending to members of parliament, and condescending to the people of Canada.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Gilbert:** He was contemptuous. He treated the subject very lightly. He wanted to make the political point that he was not going to punish the people in Quebec. This same minister was recently convicted for contempt of the judiciary. He should be convicted for contempts of parliamentarians and the people of Quebec.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Sauvé:** You should be ashamed of yourself.

**Mr. Gilbert:** The Minister of Communications (Mrs. Sauvé) is underlining my feelings with regard to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Any minister who makes a speech like he made should be brought to attention by the Canadian people.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Gilbert:** He started off by saying, "I intend to serve the Canadian people to the best of my ability", and then threw in as an aside, "I am not going to pursue my political ambitions elsewhere." Isn't that kind of a minister who has just been appointed to a very important position, to say that he is not going to pursue his political ambitions elsewhere?

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Where has he gone?

**Mr. Gilbert:** What did he do? After the speech he literally flew out of the chamber to the TV room to be interviewed about the asinine statement that he was not going to punish the people of Quebec. Our Indian friends have the right to say that we, white people, especially the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, speak with a forked tongue.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Gilbert:** When I heard the minister say that we as parliamentarians and we as Canadians do not understand the native housing programs as we should, it made me sick of heart. I have read the comments of the native people. I listened to the constructive criticism of the hon. member for Lambton-Kent, my colleague from the Northwest Territories (Mr. Firth) and other members of the House. If that is the minister's attitude with regard to a very serious problem, my best advice to him—and I give it through his parliamentary secretary—is that he read the booklet "Bulletin" which is published by the Canadian Association in Support of the Native Peoples, the August issue. He would indeed be filled in with regard to the serious problems.

[Mr. Gilbert.]

The minister should get together with the hon. member for Northwest Territories, the Minister of State in charge of small business (Mr. Marchand), the members of the Indian affairs committee and some housing people from this chamber and travel from one end of the country to the other in order to get a response from the native people with regard to the serious problem that we have.

This motion is timely, and the discussion is urgent in view of the disastrous results of the native housing program and the recent judgment of Mr. Justice O'Driscoll with regard to the Rudnicki affair. I am amazed and appalled at the artificial division that we have with regard to the treatment of native people in Canada. We have a division between the Metis and non-status Indians who come under the control of the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. We have the status Indians which come under the control of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Allmand). Finally, there is housing for Eskimo people which is the responsibility of the Territorial Commission of the Northwest Territories. I have never seen such confusion.

• (1730)

We see the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development developing a program for status Indians to be put into position in April, 1977. There are many shortcomings in that program and I certainly wish the minister had been in the House this afternoon to hear about some of those shortcomings as expressed by the hon. member for Lambton-Kent along with others. He is not here, and in one way that is inexcusable.

**Mr. Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I should like to tell the House that the motion we are studying today was drafted in such a way that we on this side were under the impression that we were considering urban affairs. The hon. member is still referring to matters which come under the responsibility of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. However, the minister will be here at eight o'clock and no doubt he will take the opportunity of entering the debate.

**Mr. Gilbert:** I will accept that interpretation from the parliamentary secretary. I was somewhat confused myself as to what the hon. member for Lambton-Kent was driving at, though I did think he was getting at the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. In any case, I am sorry the minister is not here, because the mover of this motion intended to cover a wide range. What really hurts is that the Minister of State for Urban Affairs has not deemed it necessary to come back and listen to the remarks of the members because the new Minister of State for Urban Affairs has inherited the program to build 50,000 homes for Metis and non-status Indians; as at the end of 1975 roughly 2,700 homes had been built. This disappointing performance is, in my opinion, the result of the artificial division of responsibility and lack of consultation with the persons affected. These people have shown the patience of Job. They deserve better treatment. They have a right to be mad, and a right to demand immediate action.