

mortgage interest rates and a fair deal for the Canadian home owner. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that our discussions in caucus and our debate in this House will be based upon that principle.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Our rules now provide for a ten-minute period for questions or comments on the Hon. Member's speech.

[English]

Are there any questions?

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I have just a comment on what the previous speaker had to say very early on in his remarks. I believe it really goes without saying, but I would like to say it anyway, that it is completely unfair for anyone to suggest that the New Democratic Party, or for that matter anyone here in the House, does not care about the Canadian home owner. We may have disagreements with our Progressive Conservative colleagues and with the Government about how best that care ought to be exercised and what the real effect of certain policies will be. However, I believe it is certainly unfair and unwarranted to rise and suggest that we in this corner do not care about the Canadian home owner, although we have some very serious policy disagreements with the Hon. Member and his Party about how home ownership in this country ought to be fostered and increased and with respect to what other housing policies ought to be followed by the Government. We also share some of that Party's criticisms of the Government. I feel it is completely unfair to suggest—and I just want to put him on the record—that we in the New Democratic Party do not care about Canadian home owners. We obviously do, we always have, and we always will.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my colleague's remarks and I could discern from them no real effort to improve the Bill or to come to the defence of the Canadian home owner. I heard a lot about co-op housing, that kind of thing, but I did not hear any real effort to improve the Bill and that is why I was called upon to make that comment. It was from the heart.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that when a Bill gets into committee, members of the committee from all Parties will make an attempt to improve the Bill. We are debating the principle of the Bill and I spoke about what principles our Party upholds when it comes to a housing policy. I feel the suggestion that the approach of the Progressive Conservative Party is somehow to be exalted is unwarranted. It is trying to give the impression that its approach to this Bill will be non-political, and that it has only the interests of the Canadian home owner at heart when those Hon. Members go into committee.

I know the Hon. Member is going to rise and say that I have summarized his Party's position exactly. However, I do not believe that to be the case, Mr. Speaker. As is often the case in this House, one can reject a Bill, indicating that one is going to oppose it and then in committee try in every way to make the Bill—if it is going to be passed by an arrogant Government

over opposition to it—as good as it possibly can be. Some Bills, quite frankly, are beyond redemption. We will have to see when we get into the study of this Bill whether or not it belongs in that category and just what kind of amendments we may or may not move. That remains to be seen once we get into committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Are there any other questions? Debate.

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, I see that the greater part of my presentation will have to be given this afternoon.

However, in preface I want to bring to the attention of the House something which impressed me with respect to the whole housing question and public policy in the housing field. One of the first times I had anything to do with housing policy was when I attended a meeting in Yellowknife around 1965 or 1966. In attendance was the Hon. Jack Pickersgill, who is not a member of the Party which I support. Sometimes we on this side of the House have some rather nasty things to say about him. However, he was there at the head of this meeting listening to presentations on the subject of housing from many of the people who have now become my constituents. The people were coming forward and saying: "I live in a two-room house; I would like a four-room house". Or: "I would like to live in much better circumstances than I do at present".

To all of these inquiries and suggestions, most of which would entail the expenditure of public funds, Jack Pickersgill invariably said: "But you cannot afford it; your income is only so much. You cannot afford the type of housing which you would like. Is it proper that the rest of Canadians should make it possible for you to have the type of housing that you want? Because we all want the best kind of housing".

Therefore, in my presentation this afternoon I will keep in the back of my mind that housing, like everything else, has to be paid for; and to what extent should the individual be responsible for paying for his own housing, and where does the Government fit in? I look forward to debating this issue shortly after three o'clock, Sir.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.