

*Adjournment Debate*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** Accordingly, the Order is discharged, the Bill withdrawn and the subject matter thereof referred to the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure.

Order discharged and Bill withdrawn.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** Is there unanimous consent to call it six o'clock?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 66 deemed to have been moved.

### CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION—LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN TORONTO

**Mr. Reginald Stackhouse (Scarborough West):** Madam Speaker, I take the floor this afternoon to refer to the need for the Government to deal with the housing crisis in Metro Toronto in a unique way. Prices have soared to heights that no one would have believed possible even five years ago. Rents have gone into orbit. There is no relief in sight.

My reason for focusing attention on this issue today is to ask the Government to face the reality difficult for many Canadians to see, that is, that the problem is not the same uniformly throughout the country. Metro Toronto and other massive urban communities like it are not the same as towns, villages, and smaller cities and they should not be treated the same. When government policy on housing is determined, it is not good enough to have a policy that seems good across Canada. Some areas have special needs and need special policies. Metro Toronto is one of these.

It is possible for apartment vacancy rates to vary so much across the country that the rate can be zero in the City of Scarborough, the city in which I live and which I represent, while apartments are plentiful in communities elsewhere in the country. In 1985, for example, the national vacancy rate was 1.4. The Metro Toronto vacancy rate was only 0.4, three and one-half times less the national average. It is even more serious, more critical, more impossible, in Metro Toronto now.

In 1987 the price of a standard two-storey house in the Halifax-Dartmouth area went up on an average of about 4 per cent. In Vancouver the rise in the same year was about 8 per cent. These are very serious rises in view of the general cost of living going up about 4 per cent, but in the Toronto area the

increases varied district by district from a low of 18 per cent to a high of 77 per cent in 1987.

Just recognize what that means to a person seeking a home, not just because he or she prefers to live there for personal reasons, but because that may be the place where there is an opportunity for a job, a chance to practice a profession, a chance to rise in an organization. There is no doubt that work is there. We have unemployment rates approaching zero. However, the pressure on people to find housing that they can afford makes the invitation of full employment less attractive than it should be.

I will not be surprised if the spokesperson for the Minister responsible for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation replies by telling us how much has been spent on social housing in Toronto, how many housing units have been started in Metro Toronto either under government funding or by private enterprise. With all respect to the spokesperson, Madam Speaker, that reply will be like claiming that we have found a cure for cancer because we have increased the supply of aspirin.

The solution does not lie in meeting some of the need that would be normal in normal times. Our need is critical in a crisis time, made so not because Metro Toronto people are greedier than anywhere else, not because they are grasping in a way that you will not find anywhere else, but obviously because the population there is growing at a rate which outstrips almost any other area in the country.

I submit that that is to the good, not only of the people of Metro Toronto but to the people of Canada generally because the prosperity and upturn of business in that area creates purchasing of products and commodities which come from elsewhere in the country. We are, by our very growth in Metro Toronto, serving Canada. That same growth is making it almost impossible for many people in Toronto to find accommodation.

• (1750)

I am asking that for once Metropolitan Toronto and other massive urban areas like it begin to get the kind of recognition that their people deserve. I am impressed how business in the metropolitan area of Montreal has taken an upturn in recent years. I rejoice in the renewed prosperity there. That is putting a pressure on housing in Montreal and it is striking to contrast the prices for accommodation in Montreal today and just a few years ago.

I am not asking for a favour to be given to one area, rather, recognition to be given to one type of area which is growing at breakneck speed. Because the demand for accommodation is pressing on the available supply, we are facing prices for houses and rents for apartments that a few years ago would have defied imagination.

I ask that we recognize this situation. If we have a special problem, let us deal with it in special terms. Why treat those