

transportation corridors and open spaces for recreation and similar community purposes.

Federal financial support for land assembly and development of comprehensively planned new suburban communities within urban regions.

That was in 1967. Then in January, 1969, the hon. member for Trinity issued his task force report. What he said could be summarized as follows: the present system of assembling and servicing land in much of urban Canada is irrational in concept and inefficient in practice. He then referred to the grand practice followed in the city of Saskatoon. That city acquired a great deal of land during the thirties as a result of default on payment of taxes. It used that land in the proper planning sense. The land was serviced and lots were sold. Further land was acquired in the suburbs and the city now has 5,000 acres, which will meet its needs for the next 20 years. He said the lesson to be learned from this was that municipalities or regional governments should acquire and service substantial portions of land within their boundaries and the federal government should be prepared to make loans to municipalities for this purpose. He also set forth the example of Mr. William Teron, creator of the Kanata development in Ottawa, who said that there is no use dreaming about planning a city unless you own the land.

From January, 1969, we have had very insignificant government action. It has been very much like giving a starving elephant a peanut, very much like giving a starving man a handshake. There have been two methods by which the government has acquired land for housing purposes. Under one the federal government pays 70 per cent of the cost of assembling raw land for residential purposes and the balance is borne by the province and the municipality concerned. From 1948 to 1969, 25,568 lots were authorized for development, but I would point out that in 1969 only 960 lots were authorized for development. The second method is a federal-provincial agreement under which the federal government pays 90 per cent of the acquisition costs and then it recoups its money by having the municipality take out a loan which is repayable within 15 years. In 1969 we spent the small amount of \$7 million on land acquisition.

On the issue of the land bank there was a great confrontation between the hon. member for Trinity, when he was responsible for housing and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). As a result the minister, who is now the hon. member for Trinity, resigned his cabinet post. Notwithstanding what happened between the Prime Minister and the hon. member for Trinity, the present minister has not acted. Is it any wonder that the hon. member for Trinity wrote an article in the *Toronto Telegram* in January, 1971, in which he said that housing in Canada is bad and is getting worse, and that the government missed an excellent opportunity by not providing funds for municipal land banks in order that we could reduce one of the main costs of housing in Canada? He said that the cost of land and the servicing of land is one of the main elements in the cost of housing.

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The hon. member for Trinity also said that he could see no reason, financial or constitutional, why this could not have been done. We in the New Democratic Party have said the same thing for many years. We continue to preach the gospel to the minister but he continues to be deaf to our requests. We ask the minister, why has he not accepted the excellent recommendations which the hon. member for Trinity made in the *Toronto Telegram*?

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister without Portfolio):** Mr. Speaker, as always I welcome the constructive suggestions of the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert). I always have respected the recommendations and suggestions of my predecessor and close friend and associate, the hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer). The fact of the matter is, however, that the situation is not quite as it was presented. I am sure that the hon. member had no intention of being incorrect.

We made a change in the act in June, 1969, with regard to land assembly. I believe that the hon. member for Trinity had suggested 100 per cent loans when we were dealing directly with municipalities. We considered that seriously. There were no ideological considerations attached to it. However, the fact is that the municipalities, whether we liked it or not, operate in part under the jurisdiction of the provinces and any loans to the municipalities would sooner or later, directly or indirectly, have to be approved by the provincial governments under their municipal acts.

There was really no indirect way around that. However, we amended the act to permit loans to municipalities, with provincial approval, for amounts of up to 90 per cent of the cost of acquiring and servicing land, as the hon. member pointed out. We changed the breadth and scope of that provision from what it was before, because it was restricted to assembly of land for public housing purposes. We widened it to general housing purposes. That is a fairly large hole through which many endeavours can be brought in.

• (10:20 p.m.)

I cannot tonight, off the top of my head, correct the hon. member precisely with regard to the amount of money spent last year, but I think it was closer to \$30 million than to the \$7 million that he mentioned. When the CMHC budget is laid before the House, I hope within the next very few days, he will find that we have given increased attention to that program under the National Housing Act. Rightly or wrongly, last year we chose to devote a very significant portion of our capital funds under the CMHC budget to the provision of housing for fast starts and, particularly, for low-income housing.

If I may now refer to the article of the hon. member for Trinity stating that housing in Canada is bad and is getting worse, which the hon. member for Broadview