

*Housing*

with his interpretation of Canada's constitution. I want to say that the public will no longer condone weaseling and waffling and that the public knows there are problems facing this country which must be dealt with effectively. The public will not be satisfied with being told that the government is hiding behind the constitution.

Just the other day the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities presented a brief to the Prime Minister and his government. In point No. 7 they said this, and I think it is significant:

Federal authorities can, of course, shrug their shoulders, point to Head 92 (Section 8) of the B.N.A. Act and remind the federation that municipal institutions are the creatures of provincial governments... (a more accurate term is that recently used by a distinguished Canadian urban planner, who described municipalities as the "orphans" of provincial governments)... but this kind of constitutional argument is not meaningful: in the first place, the problems of the municipalities are provincial problems, and vice-versa; secondly, with over 50 per cent of Canada's population accounted for by 18 urban areas, the federal government cannot take the view that the spectrum of urban frustration suffered by these Canadians has no constitutional relevance to federal jurisdictions.

Unless the government is prepared to recognize that such problems of housing, urban renewal, pollution, manpower training and inflation are being placed at its doorstep by the people of Canada, until it recognizes that the people of Canada will not allow it to take refuge in constitutional interpretation, I believe that this country will continue to wallow in what the Minister of Transport referred to as a lack of initiative.

The Prime Minister has had his first warning. This resignation is symptomatic of a malaise in our society, of a discontent with the government's failure to take the initiative and the government's failure to act. If the government continues to neglect these responsibilities which it quite properly has, then I submit there will be a growing disparity between different areas and that there will be growing disunity in Canada.

The Prime Minister has a great opportunity, if he avails himself of this warning and if he grasps the nettle and tackles these problems, using the constitution as it is, and asks for the co-operation of the provinces for a delegation of power and provision for concurrent jurisdiction to deal with any problems which cannot be dealt with under present jurisdiction. If he accepts this opportunity he will have the support of the people of Canada

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

and he will have taken a first step on the road to enable Canada to reach that great destiny of which it is capable.

[*Translation*]

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the proposition we are now considering asks for the adjournment of the house—

—for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration—

—and solving the housing crisis now prevailing in Canada.

I was hoping that the mover of this motion would take the floor about the housing crisis, Mr. Speaker. He did not say a word about it, except in very general terms, right at the start, that is—

[*English*]

"the worsening of the housing situation in this country,"

[*Translation*]

But no statistics or figures.

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

**Mr. Trudeau:** The leader of the New Democratic party has taken advantage of this to talk about the constitution while we believed we were here to discuss housing.

We are listening to comments on the constitution. Indeed, I shall be glad to talk about it myself, if I am allowed the time to do so. I would just like to tell the leader of the New Democratic party that he does not fare any better in constitutional matters than in housing.

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

**Mr. Trudeau:** We are very glad to take part in this debate. I mainly want to put statistics before the house and the country to stop all that talk about the housing crisis and its seriousness, in the light of the other priorities.

[*English*]

**An hon. Member:** Do you expect anybody to believe that?

**Mr. Trudeau:** I certainly cannot believe that and I could not deduce that from what the leader of the N.D.P. said, because there was not one word which indicated what was the crisis in housing. His whole speech was about the constitution of Canada. I welcome such a debate and we will have one whenever the ministers on this side and the leaders of