

Housing

Department of Urban Affairs credit for forwarding to each member of parliament 25 or 30 of these kits. I think that is a very good idea. I drive back to my riding on Friday afternoons and this is a much speedier way of getting these kits into the hands of my constituents. I would suggest that CMHC regional offices be assigned the task of information centre, where people—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. gentleman but his allotted time has expired. Nevertheless he may continue if there is unanimous consent.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): There is not unanimous consent. The hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley.

Mr. Cliff McIsaac (Battleford-Kindersley): Mr. Speaker, I regret very much that my hon. friend is unable to conclude his very interesting remarks this afternoon. From my own point of view, owing to the shortage of time I intend to try to limit my remarks in order to give my colleague, the hon. member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) and another hon. member opposite the opportunity to participate in what has turned out to be a very interesting and worth-while debate.

I should like to deal very briefly, though I may not even be able to do it briefly, with four particular points this afternoon. The first is federal housing policies in general under this government; secondly, housing policies as they affect and have affected my home province of Saskatchewan; thirdly, urban transportation policies under this government; and fourthly, the programs and the steps taken by the government, particularly by the Department of Transport, relative to implementing the Hall Commission Report in so far as it relates to energy conservation in serving transportation needs in the prairie provinces.

I believe it was the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. White-way) who, earlier in the debate this afternoon, was critical of the government for its lack of consultation and discussion with the provinces. I can certainly say that there has been ample discussion and consultation with federal, provincial and municipal officials in the province of Saskatchewan. I am not sure if the hon. member is aware of what has transpired with respect to Manitoba, but each and every one of the wide variety of federal programs is implemented and operated jointly.

I have the information sheets of a number of programs here. For example, with the Neighbourhood Improvement Program criteria are set out for the participation of municipalities and neighbourhoods. This is set out in an agreement between the federal government and each of the provincial governments. There has certainly been discussion. There has been a good deal of tailoring and developing of programs in Saskatchewan over the last eight to nine years in order to meet the needs of smaller urban communities which so often were left out of the early CMHC and federal programs. I can testify to this

[Mr. Darling.]

personally, Mr. Speaker, from my days in the provincial legislature of Saskatchewan.

I am aware that more federal programs are now available which hitherto had perhaps been available only to larger urban centres. These are now being tailored and being made available to meet the needs of smaller centres throughout the prairies and across Canada. So that kind of consultation has been taking place.

I appreciated the tone and thrust of the remarks of the hon. member for Ottawa-Carleton (Mrs. Pigott) when opening the debate after moving her motion. Her remarks were not nearly as crusty and as critical, in a sense, as the tone of the motion which is before us, which asks the House to condemn the Liberal government, particularly the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Ouellet), for policies which fail to meet, and so on. The kinds of programs, the numbers of projects and the tremendous developments in the housing field, not only in my province of Saskatchewan but right across the country in the last several years, put the lie to the thrust of the motion now before the House.

In typical fashion, to which we have grown quite accustomed in the House when listening to remarks of hon. members opposite, we do not find any new solutions, policies or programs put forward. There is criticism of existing programs and efforts, but in general no new solutions have come forward. There is no new formula or direction for the government to pursue.

The programs which have been of particular value so far as the province of Saskatchewan has been concerned are those which have already been referred to by others in this debate, such as the RRAP program, the AHOP program, and the Neighbourhood Improvement Program. Then we have housing for senior citizens. I think we have a national record in the province of Saskatchewan in terms of the number of senior citizens per hundred thousand of population who have been housed. Only last week I participated in the opening of a new apartment complex which provides excellent housing at subsidized rental for senior citizens over the age of 65. Some 70 couples or so were accommodated in that project, and this is but one of a dozen or more which have been constructed in the last number of months in my province alone.

One program I should like to dwell on for a moment or two is the rural and native housing program. This is a program which has been of particular interest to the province of Saskatchewan. It is one which has met a need but which has some considerable distance to go in the province of Saskatchewan so far as housing is concerned. What we need in my constituency and further north, as well as in urban centres, is an adequate supply of good housing for our native people.

Several programs have been worked out in co-operation with CMHC and the government of Saskatchewan in an attempt to improve both the number and the quality of housing units on Indian reserves throughout Saskatchewan—in the northern Saskatchewan communities which are Metis and Indian, and also in cities like Regina and Saskatoon where providing adequate housing for native people continues to be a problem.