

struction, housing and community planning, our own government has this to say about rents in relation to family income:

On the basis of \$20 a month being a desirable rent, nearly 40 per cent of the tenant families in the low-wage group at present pay more than they can afford. Nearly one-third of them pay rents of between \$20 and \$35.

These figures are significant in showing the proportions of wage-earner tenants who would be satisfactorily accommodated if it were possible to provide new housing renting at \$20 a month. Only in Toronto, London and Windsor would this provide for half of the population in this group . . .

Allowing not \$20 but one-fifth of their normal budget the percentage of families paying disproportionate rent is not 40 per cent, but more than twice as much 88.7 per cent. The city percentages range from 66.5 per cent in Halifax to 92 per cent in Winnipeg.

In the absence of any changes in basic incomes throughout the country, this is tantamount to saying that three-quarters to four-fifths of this lower third of city families depend on a public low-rent housing programme if they are to be provided with proper housing accommodation.

This is from the report of our own department of reconstruction. There is one place where the government could put some of the surplus revenue, because their own reports indicate that these people will never have adequate housing unless we institute large-scale, low-cost housing projects, financed by this government. Up to this time we have had housing projects that benefit mainly the insurance companies. I was disappointed to see that the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply (Mr. Howe) in his latest statement points out that under the new plan which we intend to institute, or which the government intends to institute—again I wish to dissociate myself from this—we are going to double the depreciation; we are going to help them acquire land and then we are going to talk about four-roomed units which will rent for not more than \$70. A four-roomed unit renting at \$70 will not meet the needs of these people who must be assisted because their incomes will not allow them to pay economic rents.

What about the health facilities of our people? Well, there is not any Canadian standard at all for health. There is not any Canadian standard for pensions. There is not any Canadian standard to take care of widows. There is not even any Canadian standard to take care of the people who are on relief. Much to my surprise today I found that only three provinces have legislation under which the province is responsible for relief. The other six provinces leave it to the municipality, which means that these people who are out of work are completely without protection, except, of

[Mrs. Strum.]

course, the limited protection of unemployment insurance, which does not begin to cover all the people who are out of work. So I would urge the government that when we have these substantial surpluses we should not wait for all the provinces to come in before beginning to plan for the protection of the Canadian family.

In this house we are horrified at the divorce rate. We say, "We do not believe in divorce." None of us wants divorce. I do not believe we should ever permit conditions to exist that break up family life; yet here we have low incomes, bad housing, no provision for health, no provision for the widow other than what the provinces choose to give, and so on. We have inadequate provision for the arthritics, the cripples, the people who cannot look after themselves.

An hon. MEMBER: Would divorce cure those?

Mrs. STRUM: All these conditions put a strain on family life, as I think the hon. member will admit. Anything that can take the strain off family life, anything that can house our people under conditions of health and decency and comfort will add to the permanency of family life and will help cut down our divorce rate.

Mr. GRAYDON: How do you explain Hollywood on that basis?

Mrs. STRUM: Perhaps you know more about Hollywood than I do. I just happen to know about normal people, such as I think I represent.

In closing, I merely wish to urge the government to make use of the excellent material for which they themselves have paid. I am amazed at the wealth of material that comes from the bureau of statistics and government departments. If I want something my secretary comes up with armloads of stuff that the government themselves have prepared, as to which the government departments have already done the groundwork and made the surveys. We know what is the matter; we know how to cure it; we know what the government intends to do. Let us do it now.

Mr. L. D. TREMBLAY (Dorchester): Mr. Speaker, often while listening to some speakers in this house I have felt that if an outsider were to attempt to assess the true economic, political and social situation in Canada with regard to the past, and more particularly with reference to the future, he would soon have the feeling that he might as well attempt to square the circle. Truly, is there any other place, with the possible exception of the law courts, where one may sit and listen to an