

### Supply

urban blight. People are making an honest effort to win that fight. A couple of months ago there were 133 applications under RRAP from that one small neighbourhood. Now that this great new Tory initiative has been brought in, only 21 applications are eligible. Fully 75 per cent of the people accepted for the program previously have now been taken off the eligibility list. That story has been repeated in neighbourhood after neighbourhood in my city. You will find that of the applications in existence before the new program was brought in, fully 70 per cent no longer apply. The reason is that the threshold of \$13,000 is simply not high enough to meet the various family configurations in the downtown and urban neighbourhoods, so they have been removed from the program. Of course, at the same time the landlords in the program get a substantial hike. The Government is saying to the more modest income families in the neighbourhood that they no longer count. The end result in that particular urban neighbourhood will be the elimination of the ability of individual home owners to fight against urban erosion and upgrade their communities, all for the sake of "target threshold needs". Those are the code words for the Government's decision to no longer recognize its responsibility to provide incentives towards the improvement and redevelopment of our urban neighbourhoods. It is a betrayal of those neighbourhoods and communities.

We have the same kind of program dealing with off reserve Indian housing. My colleague, the Hon. Member for Cochrane—Superior (Mr. Penner), knows this full well as Indian affairs critic. The head of the Manitoba Métis Federation, Ed Swain, has said the same thing. Days after the announcement of the new program, and after analysing the figures, he said that this program no longer allows the Manitoba Métis Federation to continue its off-reserve housing program. Again, the income requirements are such that those families deepest in need cannot apply, and those who were using the program have incomes above the threshold.

What is the point in having a program that does not work? We know what the point is. The Government does not want the programs to work at all. It is more interested in saving money and cutting back the CMHC budget. It wants to reduce expenditures on social housing. This is a carefully crafted formula to ensure that social housing programs do not work. In that way, step by step, the Government can withdraw from its responsibility and commitments to the housing needs of Canadians. That is really the message behind this brave new world the Government has introduced.

We have certainly seen over the past two years the peculiar ideological hang-up the Government has about the constructive programs and initiatives it can provide to people to help themselves. But why has the Government concentrated solely on the social housing program expenditures? Have members of the Government talked about all the incentives given to developers? Have you seen them cutting back on major tax expenditure programs? Oh, no, they have concentrated exclusively on the social housing programs. They are not only cutting back on the dollars, but by introducing unworkable or

restrictive formulas they have eliminated from eligibility the very people who have been making use of these programs. That is why we have presented this resolution. We are trying to draw to the attention not only of members of the Government but of the public at large the fact that this is a phoney program. It is not designed to help those in need because need is defined at such a restricted level that it can never be met.

Going back to the conditions of the RRAP program, a very valuable and important development taking place in one of our major cities has now been brought to a virtual standstill. I wish the Government would bring to a standstill the efforts it is making on countervailing actions taken by the U.S. If it was as effective in that area of public policy as it is in bringing to an absolute halt the useful housing initiatives on the books, we would be much happier. The fact of the matter is that, whether it be the mayor of the City of Winnipeg, the head of the rehabilitation program, or the provincial Minister of Housing, the conclusion is the same: The Government has killed the program. It has done an injustice to that part of Winnipeg. The end result will be that over the next several years the valiant efforts being made to fight urban blight and erosion will be lost. The social cost will therefore be much higher. Housing was contributing substantially not only to the physical renewal of the city, but to human and emotional renewal. People were beginning to take pride in their community because they could do something about it. They could get RRAP grants and fix their houses. They knew they were doing something valuable not only for themselves but for their neighbourhood. Yet this Government, which talks about private initiative, is taking the initiative away from those people.

When we sit down five years from now to calculate the end cost, it is going to be much higher than if this program had been maintained. Many of those neighbourhoods will now no longer be able to provide that resurrection which was taking place. The deterioration will set in and we will be paying much higher costs to keep the repairs going. That is the end result. Can anyone in their right mind conclude that that is an effective social program? Is that really effective policy-making when you are creating a worse problem than the one you now have? You end up not only providing an inequitable answer, but one that will be more costly. That simply does not make sense.

• (1510)

The point of this debate is to try to get this Government to change its approach on social housing and on the RRAP program. It will not be that much more costly. We are talking maybe of \$2 million or \$3 million more over the next three or four years. That is the difference that it makes. The end result would be the regeneration of thousands of housing units, as opposed to a standstill in those programs.

We are here to try to appeal to the common sense of this Government, to ask it why it would destroy something that was working well. Why erode something that was having an