

National Housing Act

housing projects in the entire world. I refer to Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Mr. Ellis: Socialist governments.

Mr. Philpott: Answering my loud-spoken friend the hon. member for Regina City, may I say that I went to the chief town planner of the city of Stockholm, who showed me over a period of several days some of their masterly housing projects. At the end of that time he said to me, "I will venture to say that you are thinking the reason we have these wonderful projects is that we have a socialist government." I said, "Oh." He said, "Let me disabuse your mind because in 1903, before the ordinary people of the city of Stockholm had the vote, hard-headed businessmen who then ran the city of Stockholm and who were good conservatives—not Progressive Conservatives, who are Conservatives going backward—bought all the land for many miles around the city of Stockholm." I had the privilege of seeing a model city of 30,000 or 35,000 people which is being built as a complete entity this year, and which was possible because of the foresight of those old conservatives.

I know the socialists are always ready to boast about their achievements, but let us give credit where credit is due. The credit for the great advance in housing in Sweden is due to those hard-headed businessmen who happened to be conservatives.

I must say that the Scandinavian countries are ahead of us in the construction of low-cost unsubsidized rental housing. They have more rental housing than we have. They have not so much room as we have, and they have to go in more for apartments. I saw beautiful apartments in this city I was talking about with about the same space that I have in the Tiffany in Ottawa, yet the rental was only \$45 a month. I am not going to say how much I pay for fear the landlord will boost my rent again. The thing is that in Sweden the rentals are very much lower than they are here in Canada.

Mr. Nicholson: How much would that cost in Ottawa?

Mr. Philpott: I said I was not going to tell, but it would be several times what it would cost in Sweden. I think we gain nothing by denying the fact that under the housing scheme which they have been able to operate in the Scandinavian countries they have been able to provide for their people rental housing at a lower cost than we have provided it here. However, let me say for the benefit of my hon. friends opposite who are always one jump ahead of themselves that we must remember that the whole wage scale and the

price scale is lower in the Scandinavian countries. When you pay a carpenter in Scandinavia one-half or less of what you pay a carpenter in Ottawa, naturally you are going to get lower-cost housing.

There is one other respect in which the Scandinavian countries are ahead of us, and that is in the provision of special apartments for their old age pensioners. I saw thousands of beautiful apartments in Sweden, I saw many in Norway and I saw thousands of beautiful units in Denmark, which for my money is the happiest and most contented country in the entire world. I went in to see an old lady of over 80 years of age who had been born in Germany but who was getting an apartment in Copenhagen for \$4 per month. When her husband was still alive she and her husband paid only \$6 a month. All through the Scandinavian countries I saw evidence of the admirable planning which they have used and the great care they have shown for the benefit of their older people.

Just today I had a letter from an old lady 80 years of age, and it was this letter that made me remember the old lady in Denmark. This lady came originally from Saskatchewan and she is now trying to live in British Columbia on \$40 a month, as she still has three months to go before she will be eligible for the \$20 supplement. She cannot go back to Saskatchewan and get the supplement there because she would have to be there a year before she would be eligible. She is paying a rental of \$7.50 a week. I think the mathematics of the thing speak for themselves.

I believe it is the responsibility of every Canadian, not just those who have the honour to sit in this house, to spend more time and energy in getting local initiative lined up for the construction of low-cost rental housing projects, and above all to get local initiative going in the design of housing schemes for old age pensioners. Many of the branches of the Canadian Legion have reserves of well over \$50,000, and any branch of the Canadian Legion or of any other organization having such a reserve could swing without any further ado a housing deal running into hundreds of thousands of dollars. They could supply low rental housing for veterans receiving war veterans allowance, and all that sort of thing.

I submit that is the missing link which it is the duty of every hon. member in this house on every side to try to remedy. We must have more local co-operation to get these low-rental housing schemes for old age pensioners under way.

Mr. F. G. J. Hahn (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to take part in this debate—