

*Housing*

cannot help but think he is looking at a prison. Having made that criticism of the project, I want to say that the project itself and the facilities in it are infinitely better than the facilities and houses in which the people were living before they moved into the project.

The Minister of Transport and his task force did not ask the key question which they should have asked when they were travelling the country looking at public housing projects. The question is not, "What is wrong with this project?" but, "Do the accommodations in this housing development compare with the housing accommodations and conditions in which you lived before you came here?" If the task force had asked that very simple and elementary question, I am certain they would have received a 100 per cent response that with all the faults and criticisms one can make of public housing units which are built in this country, the people living in them are infinitely better off than they were when they lived in the slums from which they came.

That is the situation which exists. That is the situation we ought to be moving to correct. It is the situation which the Minister of Transport was examining. I may not agree with some of his proposals for solution, but one cannot gainsay the fact that the minister was interested in the problem. One cannot lose sight of the fact that the minister was committed to improving the environment of people living in slum conditions, those living in the deteriorated cores of the cities of Canada. I am sure the Minister of Transport is enough of a pragmatist that, had he continued in office and seen that the proposals he enunciated in his task force report could not or would not work, he would have come up with better solutions. But the minister has resigned.

I say now as I said when I began my speech, that the people of this country have a right to know why he resigned. The people of this country have a right to know what, if anything, the government proposes to do about housing for the millions of people in the low and middle-income brackets who either cannot obtain adequate housing accommodation or can only do so by cutting back on necessary expenditures for food, clothing, modest recreation and so on.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

**Hon. Bryce S. Mackasey (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, it was not my intention to participate in this debate.

[Mr. Orlikow.]

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Mackasey:** I made a mental note many months ago not to let the Socialists prod me into debate, because in the few months since this session began I have found that nothing has changed in their quarter of the house. They lost a leader for a little while. That did not seem to do them any harm, and his return does not seem to have done them much good. But he is still one of my favourite members of the House of Commons.

**An hon. Member:** How does Durante feel?

**Mr. Mackasey:** Mr. Durante will be back. Listening, as I have, for most of the afternoon to speakers from the Socialist group I have found, as I anticipated and have learned through the years to anticipate, their usual subtle method of comparing class with class. They do this in the hope that one day they may pick up enough of those votes to form a respectable part of the House of Commons.

The hon. gentleman who just resumed his seat made, in a disparaging way, a few choice observations about the hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Kaplan), whom he said was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. It does happen in Canada that one can be born into this class of society and still show an interest in the democratic process of the House of Commons. This is not true of Socialist countries, because people there are born with no spoons on the table, let alone a silver spoon in their mouth.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Have you ever been to Sweden?

**Mr. Mackasey:** Yes, I have. Sweden is a great country; you wait six and half years there for a home. That is a great Utopia; everybody is equal and on the same level. They are all poor and everybody waits six months for a home.

**An hon. Member:** You said six years just now.

**Mr. Mackasey:** Sweden is not the only Socialist country or régime that the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) can tell us about. Since he raised the question of Sweden, he might tell us about the 16 or 17 disastrous years in Saskatchewan, when they had no unemployment because people left the province faster than jobs disappeared. There were no border points, no immigration laws, no customs. If this was Utopia, Socialism at its best, the