extremely disappointed with the debate on this subject which is of such importance to Canadians. Who of the members can doubt that there have been requests by ordinary Canadians that are heartfelt? Since I made my offer to members opposite to assist with individual problems of Canadians, I have received close to 700 requests from members opposite to assist individual Canadians with problems in order to achieve some relief from higher interest rates.

We brought in a program. That program awaits passage. I refer to Bill C-89 which has been in the House for three days for discussion.

Mr. Deans: Three whole days. Isn't that awful?

Mr. Cosgrove: Does anyone in the House need three days to understand that Canadians want that relief? Do they need three days? Do they need three days more?

Mr. Deans: No.

Mr. Cosgrove: And why can we not bring Bill C-89 to the floor of the House on Monday and give that relief to Canadians?

Mr. Deans: When did you last call it?

Mr. Cosgrove: Why can we not start these programs? Why can we not start the construction of affordable rental accommodation for Canadians?

Mr. Deans: Why don't you rent out the 7,000 units?

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Nine thousand.

Mr. Deans: Nine thousand.

Mr. Cosgrove: Why can we not employ Canadians in this program? That is the question. That is the issue raised by the motion before us today. That is the issue the public will have to judge.

The Right Hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition said that Liberals will have to vote today the way in which they speak in their ridings. When I speak in my riding and in any other riding across Canada which I have the privilege to visit I bring the same message. From now on it will be focused on what is happening in Parliament, why housing is not being built and why there is no provision for affordable housing, because I want to provide it.

Mr. Deans: How about the 9,000 units sitting empty? Why don't you rent them out?

Mr. Cosgrove: I began by saying that the thrust of this government in difficult economic times in this area of social responsibility was to adopt the principle that we direct our resources to those who first have to be helped because they need help more than anyone else. I indicated there was a response which would assist thousands, not only in their housing needs but in their need to find meaningful employment. That legislation is before the House. I talked about the mortgage renewal plan, which, by the way, was confirmed by the court in Saskatchewan in a review of legislation by that government. I said that we are on course, that we should be providing inequity assistance to those people most affected. I was very pleased to see that support.

The government has done more than that. We have continued our social commitment. In fact, we have more than continued it. We have increased our commitment to the social needs of Canadians in the housing program. We have undertaken a review of the rural and native program, a program which serves Canadians of modest needs and of particular needs because of geography. These programs are before the government for consideration.

The government has undertaken an extensive study of the shelter allowance issue. It is not an allowance to assist Canadians to find a response to their housing needs through a specific building program, but to give them increased income to make a choice as to where they can find relief with regard to their shelter needs. That program is under study.

There is no simple single response. The response of the government was that, in difficult economic times, we have to respond in an equitable way to those who most demand and who are most deserving of our concerns.

The major point of my intervention in this debate is that Bill C-89 is designed to serve those Canadians who need modest accommodation, accommodation not being provided by any other level of government in this country. The only answer to the needs of Canadians rests squarely with the opposition to this government. That is the point I make. That is the answer I search for. I ask all Canadians in all ridings why this government is being prevented from proceeding with that plan for affordable accommodation and with jobs for Canadians to boot.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): After consultation with the legal advisers, I can inform the House that the amendment to the motion moved by the hon. member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) is, in fact, acceptable. Therefore, the question is on the amendment which is as follows: Moved by the hon. member for Oshawa, seconded by the hon member for Kamloops-Shuswap:

> That the motion be amended by adding thereto after the words "now" the following:
>
> "And that this government be condemned for accepting the advice of the finance critic of the official opposition when he recently urged the government to maintain its high rate interest policy as it affects mortgages."

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, some 20 minutes ago when you first recognized me, I agreed to yield the floor to the minister of housing. I felt it was important that members of the House of Commons and all Canadians have a chance to hear the response of the minister of housing to the very serious allegations which were made by ten Members of Parliament in the open letter they sent to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) that the government was not doing enough to stimulate the housing industry in Canada.