

*Supply*

know if the situation is the same in the Hon. Member's own riding. I know that in Montreal, with the new housing co-operative policy, the people in the tenement sections whose incomes are around \$12,000, \$15,000 and \$20,000 are penalized.

It is because CMHC is telling these people that their incomes are too high, and they are not entitled to grants and that it has to operate according to the market income. Well, automatically, these people are excluded. Which means that the co-operative program, as delivered on the basis of the share provided by the Federal government is for people who are either very poor or somewhat better off and who can go ahead.

Well, I should like to know if in his own riding, in other areas—I know that in Toronto and Montreal, they have the same problem—but I should like to know if in his region, the people are in the same position as the working men and women of average means who are penalized because they cannot be eligible to grants under this program.

[*English*]

**Mr. Young:** Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. One of the problems identified by administrators and committees in co-op housing units is the rather rigid rules under which CMHC requires units to operate. It is specified they can only have so many low-income people in a project. In order to provide adequate funding on an ongoing basis for a project, they have to bring in more higher-income people to subsidize it. It is untenable and too rigid. This was part of the program when funding for co-op housing was introduced a few years ago.

I think the whole administrative attitude toward co-op housing needs to be revised radically. That is why I support one of the proposals from the Co-op Housing Federation, namely, that it be allowed to administrate its projects. They are democratic organizations, supported very strongly by people who have lived in co-op housing. They like that kind of housing. It provides them with a real community unit within the larger community. I think it is time that officials at CMHC sat down with the leaders of the co-op housing movement and listened to the suggestions that have been made to them to improve an already good system, though it is good only in the sense that the people in the co-op housing movement have made it a good system.

● (1720)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** We will resume debate. With the consent of the House, the Chair would propose that we proceed in the following way: As there are 25 minutes left in debate, if the House agrees, the time will be shared equally between the Hon. Member for Lincoln (Mrs. Martin) and the Hon. Member for Cape Breton—East Richmond (Mr. Dingwall).

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mrs. Shirley Martin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleague opposite for giving me an opportunity to provide an update on

the Government's activities in social housing. For almost three years now, the Government has endeavoured to use more efficiently the programs and moneys available to address the serious problems affecting close to one million Canadian households.

Hon. Members may recall that in November of 1985, my colleague, the Hon. Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. McKnight), announced a global strategy that the Government would adopt in order to systematically address the housing problems of the most impoverished members of society. This strategy consists of several phases.

First, we wanted the different levels of Government to honour their efforts toward a common objective. Second, we wanted to concentrate the expenses for social housing on those whose needs were the greatest, those who are not able to find decent housing without having to spend more than 30 per cent of their incomes. Third, we wanted to introduce improved programs to ensure that housing needs of the households served are fully satisfied.

I would like to insist on the importance of the word "strategy", since in fact we are taking the first steps toward a national policy. The results of this policy can already be measured, and that is what I would like to talk about in the time available to me this afternoon.

My opposition colleague accuses the Government of being inconsistent. If we were to believe what we hear, the policy adopted by the Government shows that there is no national policy.

Would you consider it inconsistent, Mr. Speaker, for the Government to target its efforts toward the poor? Is there any inconsistency in the fact that for the first time in the history of social housing in Canada, a Government has taken measures to control the eligibility for programs so that the neediest Canadians in the worst housing conditions can at last find decent housing? Would you consider the fact that all levels of Government were invited to join hands in fighting the problems afflicting those in need as not having a vision for a national policy?

It is the needy who should answer these questions. It is the homeless who benefit from the new initiatives of the Government. Very little was available to them before.

My colleague from the Opposition blames the Government for its lack of leadership. Is it possible that she does not know the difference between leadership and loud publicity? The federal Government works hard and often in a discreet way in housing. Maybe she would prefer it if my colleague, the Hon. Minister of Public Works (Mr. McInnes), responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing, were to announce with much publicity how the Government has managed to integrate thousands of needy families into new communities. She might also want the Minister to mention the success of the Renovation Assistance Program in the cities, towns and villages across Canada.