

National Housing Act

presumably under section 36—because certainly it is difficult to believe that under the other sections housing could be built, which would provide for the needs of people who are in those blighted areas—I think the minister realizes that limited dividend corporations are not going to charge the type of rents that the people who are now living in blighted areas can afford to pay. I know rents in the limited dividend housing dwelling units—low-rent housing they call it—are often in excess of \$60 a month. Certainly people living in slum areas in our large cities are not going to be able to pay that amount of rent. Therefore I suggest it will have to be brought about under section 36, in which case of course the municipality is again going to be making its contribution.

Now, in the event of slum clearance, if the houses on that land bring a sufficient return to exceed the cost of the purchase of the land, it means that the municipalities are going to be put to an extra expense. I am trying to make my point quite clear. If the municipality went ahead under section 36 I am suggesting that it might well be that under subsection 3 of section 23 of part III of the act the municipality would find itself in a position where it was paying more as a result of the diversion of this property to industrial or commercial purposes. Perhaps the minister can reassure me on this point. This is the doubt that exists in my mind at the moment.

Mr. Winters: I feel that the municipality has a great deal to gain from these projects. It almost invariably develops that the land redeveloped produces more revenue than it did previous to the redevelopment. I believe that when municipalities make detailed studies they will find that they are the level of government which really stand to benefit most directly from any of these redevelopment projects. And rather than having the weight of the financial burden bear on them I think they are in a very favourable position to benefit from those redevelopment projects.

Mr. Regier: Since I noticed that these amendments would be before us today I looked up what the minister had to say at page 3332 of *Hansard*. I should like to read what he said:

... the Liberal aim, namely, to provide adequate housing for every Canadian.

Then I read on in his comments, and I am going to relate this to part III in a very few moments. He pointed out that the average down payment in 1955 was \$2,821. He further indicated that in 1955 some 490 loans had been made to people whose income was under \$3,000. When we consider that the

average down payment is \$2,821, and that out of 100,000 housing units fewer than one-half of one per cent were purchased by those whose income was under \$3,000; and when we consider that there are more people in Canada whose income is under \$3,000 than those in excess of \$3,000, I think the minister will agree that we are not providing as much housing for the people of Canada who really need the housing as both he and the rest of us, I am sure, would like to see us provide. I feel that the act is in effect being used to help build houses for people many of whom would be able to build their own houses without assistance. So far as that statement is correct the whole act is falling short of its original objectives.

We now have part III, which is headed "Urban Development". I do not intend to express any opposition to the proposed amendments, but I do feel they will take away our attention from what the real purposes should be. I realize that this new part will serve a useful purpose. We on the lower mainland can certainly use it if we can persuade our ratepayers to co-operate. However, I feel that an extensive use of this new part and the leeway which is to be granted will take away our attention from the real need, that is the providing of more housing for people in the low income brackets.

I do not know what all the answers are, but I do know the local government is expected to take the initiative under the new part. What does that involve? The minister referred to the citizens of one Canadian city who were faced with a plebiscite and who voted out a proposed redevelopment scheme. I can sympathize with the local taxpayer who resents the taxes on his home being increased in order to meet an obligation which he feels should be assumed by society as a whole and not be the direct responsibility of the real estate which he owns within that municipality.

I know the minister is anxious at all times to expand home construction, and I feel that perhaps the provincial governments are more to blame than the municipal and federal governments. I should like to ask the minister whether any efforts have been made by his department to persuade the provincial governments to assume more responsibility, to carry on a little more education and to make it easier for the municipal people to endorse redevelopment undertakings?

Has the department made any effort to induce the provincial governments to assume more of the initiative? I realize it is hard for a department in Ottawa to assume much