

He went on to say that he shared my concern. That is what we hear all the time. They share your concern, but nothing happens. I shall not go into details of further complaints. All I wish to do is help the minister by placing before him a number of suggestions.

Since we are in a period of oil crisis I maintain that a great contribution could be directed toward helping those living on low and fixed incomes in many thousands of homes across Canada by immediately implementing standards across Canada to include, as a priority, the immediate insulation of homes which are substandard in quality, thereby reducing the wastage of home heating fuels.

Similarly, in the Province of Newfoundland it is necessary that the province increase the fuel allowance during the colder months of the year due to the fact that it is impossible for those receiving social assistance to cope with fuel costs. The federal government has to pay 50 per cent of this cost.

Home-owners living on welfare cannot possibly maintain their homes properly at a time when the cost of building materials is so high. I can only say that not only would both levels of government save millions of dollars in housing repairs; they would also save millions of gallons of heating fuel now being wasted.

The answer is not only to treat this RRAP program on a priority basis but to direct meaningful action, initiated by the minister, and demand that the \$10 million now allocated be increased to a realistic figure. In addition, the necessary steps must be taken to expand this very worthwhile program as an emergency measure and thereby contribute toward relieving a critical area of shortage in Canada. Lastly, we should specifically provide a stop gap to the need for new housing, a need that is difficult to cope with under present circumstances.

Hon. Barnett J. Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the interesting suggestions put forward by the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall). He suggested there have been undue delays in implementing both NIP and RRAP. We have made tremendous headway in bringing these new programs into operation. First of all, in the case of NIP, the neighbourhood improvement program, we have signed the necessary agreements with nine of the ten provinces so far and expect to sign the tenth agreement very soon. Under these agreements we are allocating more than \$40 million to the provinces for this program.

The provinces have since selected the municipalities, and a total of 64 municipalities are proceeding with neighbourhood improvement programs. Altogether these municipalities have now selected 33 neighbourhoods, and the people who reside in these neighbourhoods are actively engaged in determining the needs of the neighbourhoods for assistance under the legislation. I think we can be proud of these achievements, and I am delighted with the support that we have had from the provinces and municipalities. Indeed, the hon. member himself supported my predecessor in many of these programs. As we move into 1975 I am sure this program will begin to show very positive results.

Adjournment Debate

We must not overlook that it was this House that passed the legislation that required municipalities to adopt bylaws of minimum maintenance and occupancy standards. All the municipalities participating in the program have enacted these bylaws and this in itself is a most important achievement. I think the hon. member would agree, since I know he expressed concern about this when the legislation went through the House.

Turning next to implementation, the legislation prescribes that grants and loans for the rehabilitation of substandard property can be made available in NIP areas. Now that we have 33 areas designated under the NIP program it is possible for CMHC to apply the benefits of RRAP—the residential rehabilitation assistance program—and I am very happy to be able to inform the House that rehabilitation loans and grants have been made in 15 municipalities, and that many more municipalities will shortly benefit from this program.

I am the new Minister of Urban Affairs, as all hon. members know, and it would be inappropriate for me to take any credit that more properly belongs to my predecessor, the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Basford), as well as to the provinces and municipalities which have so wholeheartedly co-operated with us in these programs. It is a co-operative effort right down the line.

It has been suggested that the rural and native housing program announced earlier this year by the federal government has been slow in getting started.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

SOCIAL SECURITY—SUGGESTED INCREASES IN FAMILY ALLOWANCES AND OLD AGE PENSIONS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, October 2, as recorded in *Hansard* at page 34, I put this question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde):

In view of the recommendation made to the government a few days ago by the Chairman of the Food Prices Review Board to the effect that because of drastic increases in the cost of food there should be immediate increases in family allowances and in old age security, is the government giving consideration to this recommendation?

The reply of the minister was as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is surely aware that old age security pensions will be raised during October and that family allowances will also be increased as of next January 1, so as to compensate for the rise in the cost of living.

● (2210)

I came back with a supplementary question which was in fact an attempt on my part to say to the minister that he should have known better than to try to get away with that answer. What I was drawing to the attention of the government was the need for something more than quarterly escalation so far as old age security is concerned, and the need for something more than annual escalation so far as family allowances are concerned.

Indeed, had I time I could use a number of quotations to cite as my chief witness the Minister of National Health and Welfare himself. I shall limit myself to two or three things he said when he appeared before the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs on Tuesday, March 13, 1973.