

National Housing Act

to follow the policy that not over 20 per cent of the people going into one of these projects can be senior citizens? If that is the case it is obvious that there is not the slightest chance of this plan which has been put up by the city of Vancouver becoming a fact.

I think that would be a great tragedy. The city is actually prepared to step into a plan of this type which will help 130 people, and I hope the minister is not taking the broad position, that he will rule against that plan because it is a plan exclusively for senior citizens. Apparently that plan has been worked out by the city of Vancouver in the belief that there is a need that should be met. Section 36 of the housing act obviously could be used for that purpose if it were not for this ruling by the minister which, with all due deference, is very rigid, since he said a few minutes ago that he will not allow more than 20 per cent of those living in one of those projects to be senior citizens. What is the minister going to do with regard to this particular project? It has been delayed now for a matter of months.

Mr. Winters: There is no official project before us.

Mr. Green: The minister himself said he had been discussing it with the council of the city of Vancouver.

Mr. Winters: We have been discussing general principles.

Mr. Green: What was the minister discussing if not this project?

Mr. Winters: The hon. member should not make such assertions.

Mr. Green: Does the minister say that he has never heard of this project?

Mr. Winters: Mr. Chairman, I understand that officials of the city have discussed a suggested proposal with Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. They have brought it forward in the nature of a feeler to see what the reaction would be. There is no specific proposal. Nothing has come forward from the province, as is required under section 36 of the statute. I wish the hon. member would not mislead as much as he does.

Mr. Green: If a proposal to implement the plan I have been discussing were submitted, would it be considered by the government and would there be any chance of it being accepted?

Mr. Winters: How could I say when I have not seen it?

Mr. Green: The minister is just evading the issue.

Mr. Brooks: What cities and towns have made specific provision for this 20 per cent? I understood the minister to say that 7 per cent had been provided for already.

Mr. Winters: I am afraid the hon. member for Royal did not hear my statement. I said that the percentage of old people in the total population was about 7.73 per cent, and that as a general rule, without any of the rigidity which my hon. friend tries to associate with us, we have been telling the local housing authorities that we see nothing wrong with allowing up to 20 per cent of the total in any of these joint projects to be senior citizens.

Mr. Brooks: What cities have submitted plans to the department?

Mr. Winters: I would say that there are federal-provincial projects in about 50 cities across Canada.

Mr. Brooks: Is that to provide for older people?

Mr. Winters: Older people and other classes of citizens; not exclusively older people.

Mr. Brooks: Did the city of Saint John recently make application for accommodation for older people? I saw in the press some time ago that they had.

Mr. Winters: I have no knowledge of any proposal from the city of Saint John to house older people exclusively.

Mr. Ellis: Mr. Chairman, I have a comment to make regarding homes for senior citizens arising out of the comment made by the hon. member for Vancouver South in which he referred to islands of housing for older citizens and suggested that this was not a good policy. I suggest that the need for housing for senior citizens is very great and that the main thing is to get some form of housing provided.

In our own province we have recognized the advantage of getting away from multiple units, the institutional type of housing, and have provided more of the cottage style self-contained units. In answer to the inference drawn by the hon. member for Vancouver South and I believe by the minister, may I say that in my belief the main thing is to do everything we can to increase housing for senior citizens. They are the ones in the community who are generally unable to take advantage of the provisions of the act. Those who are working and with years of life ahead of them are possibly in a position to build homes, but many of our