

Business of Supply

total population of Canada increased by one-quarter between 1956 and 1966, that of the ten major cities expanded at almost double that rate.

The most important part of this article reads:

By 1980, it is estimated, six out of ten Canadians will be residing in urban areas with metropolitan populations of over 100,000. One-third of the country's population will then be concentrated in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.

The Economic Council of Canada has indicated that within another 15 years or thereabouts there will be a population of some 10 million people in the province of Ontario. I would like to think we are facing a crisis because if we do not have a crisis now, then that crisis with respect to our housing problem will be reached in 15 years. As I said in my maiden speech, I do not think about the roof over one's head, nor particularly about the garden. I am thinking about the relationship between husband and wife that can break down because of the conflicts and frustrations of urban living. I am thinking about the congestion in cities, juvenile delinquency, pride and transportation. I know an hon. member was politely chastised for getting off the track, but I want to suggest that this government must think about transportation in terms of this mass impact caused by the population growth.

I think the Prime Minister has the right idea but I do not know what is the matter with the rest of the government. They do not want to move; they talk in clichés and at times they are arrogant or disinterested. Sometimes they are apathetic, conversant or indifferent.

In Edmonton last June the Prime Minister emphasized the need for research, lower cost construction, new cities to relieve pressure on existing ones, amendments to the National Housing Act to give more help to smaller communities. He stated funds would be appropriated for land assembly, services, house construction, acquisition of rental units and research into urban transportation. He stated discussions would be held with the provinces to encourage urban research by universities and the effective use of Crown lands. I do not know what discussions the government had with the provinces. According to the information I have received, Mr. Chairman, it apparently was a partisan fiasco whereby a task force travelled the country not looking for help from the municipalities and provinces, but rather a partisan jaunt into the wilderness in order to arrive at solutions.

[Mr. Alexander.]

I am a new member trying to get an answer from the minister. I have learned when you ask a question you receive an answer in generalities. If you ask "when" the answer is, "soon".

The Minister of Transport stated during the election campaign there had not been enough concentration on the housing situation but if he was re-elected he would break the red tape and translate the thinking into action. Those are great words, Mr. Chairman. The minister stated he wanted to keep the price of land as cheap as possible. The Prime Minister did not make expensive election promises. This would give him a mandate in automatic interest rates, unemployment and the housing shortage.

I like the Minister of Transport. I think he has the possibilities of producing, but not this year. It is questionable about next year. We do not want to speak about the third year because by that time we may be getting into another area of talking to people outside these hallowed halls. On June 9 the minister stated the Liberals would put Canada ahead in the world in regard to urban development. This was great news.

The Prime Minister asked the Minister of Transport to tour Canada and meet with provincial governments, municipalities, unions, lending institutions and social workers. The minister was to find the red tape and why there was a lack of co-operation between governments. I do not know whether the minister remembers saying, "I will write a new policy on housing and pull all the strings together". He said that in New Hamburg, Ontario last June 19. I know the minister has the quality of life of Canadians uppermost in his mind, but people want action not clichés.

There is a lot of money available as I understand it, and there is need for the federal government to put money into the housing field. I believe there is approximately \$8 billion in pension funds and in five years there will be approximately \$14 billion available. Has the minister considered this? The cost of housing has always been a problem for those on the poverty line. There are some four million people now on the poverty line. At the rate we are going now these people will never be able to own their own homes.

• (8:20 p.m.)

That is one area. Now we are moving into another area, and we find that people in the middle income group are meeting problems in