

*Housing*

**Mr. Danson:** Our priority is the workingman, the average income man.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Danson:** We offered \$200 million at 8 per cent interest to builders who would create modest rental accommodation in agreement with CMHC, but people said, "No, that implies rent control; we don't want to go into those rental agreements". When we offered \$200 million there was enough response for us to offer a further \$200 million. There are proposals which are presently under review and which meet good standards of housing at rents people can afford.

In addition, private lenders are being urged into that area. Programs are set up under which 25 per cent of the units are to be made available to municipalities and provinces for low-income housing for people who even at those subsidized rates do not have sufficient income to pay for their shelter. In the past we have dealt with this under our public housing programs. They have been good programs. I admit that we made some mistakes, and we have learned from those mistakes. Less than a year ago when I first took on this portfolio, I was making speeches to municipalities and telling them, "You are showing the wrong attitude. You do not want public housing projects in your municipalities". I still question their motives in that respect and I think their concerns were rather narrow. Also, it was a reaction to programs from which we were learning and which were not the best, such as huge public housing projects in municipalities.

What we are attempting to do now is integrate people into the mainstream of society so that they are not isolated in public housing projects where social tensions and social stigmas exist, especially for children who grow up with a broader view of life when they can see their part in the total society and are not segmented in a welfare group.

I suggest we have made excellent progress. In our other programs for non-profit, co-operative housing we have committed another \$28 million. All the housing funds under the direct control of CMHC will be committed before September of this year. We do not want to parcel it off bit by bit, but, rather, get it out there quickly. That is what we have been doing; we have been speeding up our rate of commitments month by month. I ask the provinces to get the money and spend it on building housing for people who need them and cannot afford them. Until April 10 we were committing funds at an average of \$4 million a day. In the next month the rate increased to more than \$6.5 million a day, and it is now at the rate of almost \$10 million a day.

If that suggests slowness, lack of priorities or red tape, then something is wrong somewhere. To me it suggests a government that is concerned and a corporation that is doing its job under a president who knows more about building housing and developments in this country than anybody else; a man to whom we should be grateful because he has given up a career to come into the public service and serve his country; a man who cannot stand here in parliament to defend himself.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Danson:** He is a man of great dedication and talent who is known to us all and of whom we are all proud.

**Mr. Paproski:** But he does not build houses for single families.

**Mr. Danson:** We are building relatively many more than just about any other country. The hon. member for Winnipeg North suggested I should go to Europe to see what they are doing there. I have been to Europe, and I am impressed. What they have done is great. But they look at us with envy. They look at the quality of our housing and our communities, and when they compare them with theirs they envy us indeed. I think we have a great deal to learn from some of their systems of land assembly and some of their systems for decentralizing population, but I am convinced more than ever that Canada takes second place to none in the quality and quantity of its housing. I do not take much pride in the fact that there are still pockets of terribly bad housing and poverty. This we cannot tolerate and I know the government is doing all in its power to overcome it.

So far as housing for senior citizens is concerned, we have built more housing for senior citizens in the life of this government than in all of our history. This indicates a priority and a commitment.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Danson:** The matter of land assembly and sewage treatment was mentioned. It is a good point. We have committed \$1 million a year to this program. Incidentally, we have yet to turn down a single application for sewage treatment plants in all of Canada. I hope this record can continue. I suggest that those provinces which buy up tracts of land without any wish to develop them in the foreseeable future, and then cry because they do not have money to service the land on which they will not build houses anyway, had better get their priorities straightened out. They should assemble sufficient land to be able to service it and bring it into the stream. The same provinces at a time such as this seem to have the money for doing those politically attractive things that governments are inclined to do in an election period. I do not think they should be spending that money in other ways and wanting us to tax people, giving them the money which they will spend perhaps just as loosely.

In that respect, some \$300 million were allotted for provincially-initiated programs in 1975, including public housing, but less than \$38 million of that has been taken up. What I am saying is that almost half the year has gone, yet they have used up less than 30 per cent of their allocation. This is not quite that simple. There are reasons for it. I agree with the hon. member who suggested that there is a need for forward planning. We are doing forward planning, and so is CMHC. Also, we are engaging in more liaison with the provinces, in more conversations—not confrontations, not great big shows before television cameras, but the type of consultations that we have on a regular basis with the provinces and conversations that I have with housing ministers.

We were trying to get together on Monday, as the hon. member suggested, because we could not meet on May 21 for reasons which one may speculate about; but it was not