

National Housing Act

ly that degree the efficacy of NIP by taking funds away from NIP areas that would otherwise go there.

The second point I wish to make is that if a landlord in Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver or Montreal has buildings in a NIP area and also has them located outside a NIP area, if the bill remains as it is amended by the Conservative proposal, there will be perhaps a strong temptation for that landlord to take funds that would be available for rehabilitation for improving buildings outside the NIP area and not use them for rehabilitating buildings which he owns within the NIP area. In sum, the point I am making is that the force of this amendment would be to restore the bill to its original state with regard to the provisions for NIP. I think that is desirable if we want to maximize the use of the funds that we are going to put into neighbourhood improvement.

Mr. Ron Atkey (St. Paul's): Mr. Speaker, as the mover of the original amendment which put the bill into its present form, I want to have an opportunity to comment on the apparent change of heart of my friends to the left and their efforts to restore the bill to its original form. I do not know what representations were made to them from various sources to bring forth the arguments which have just been advanced by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent), but let me say that my party is much in favour of the bill as it now stands.

The clauses in question were changed to accomplish two purposes. The first purpose, to which reference has not been made by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby, was to provide some incentive for landlords to put their own money into projects. As hon. members who are on the committee will recall, the amendment introduced the concept, suggested to us incidentally by Mr. Legault of the city of Montreal, that for every dollar of rehabilitation funds that the landlord would receive from the government he would put in a dollar of his own. In this way, the provision regarding the rehabilitation of housing, rather than a totally government subsidized operation, would become a partnership operation between private landlords and the government. We saw that as a healthier development which would provide a basis for a sound rehabilitation program under the National Housing Act. The amendment put by the hon. member to my left will remove that feature and make it a totally subsidized government operation in that field. I think that that is not acceptable to my party or to the country.

The second reason the initial amendment to the clause was moved and, I suggest, why it should remain is that the area orientation of the rehabilitation program and NIP leaves something to be desired. I suggest that the restriction of rehabilitation funds to a specifically designated area in the city will tend to create ghettos from those areas and stigmatize the people who will be living in those areas as poor people by definition, only too visible to all who know, all who can see, and who have some ideas as to the source of the funds for the housing in which they live.

It has always been part of the philosophy of this party, in attempting to assist low income people through provision for the rehabilitation of existing housing, that such housing should be made available throughout the cities, in the towns, and everywhere else on an integrated basis. It is not right to confine government financed rehabilitation

[Mr. Broadbent.]

of housing to one area. It is a far healthier development to spread it across the city. The hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby suggested that this would tend to deplete the funds for work required to be done in neighbourhood improvement areas. I suggest that the reverse may be true, because if we really look for some evidence of the government's spending intention in the neighbourhood improvement areas we can go back to the minister's earlier statements, and specifically his statement last year, when an earlier version of the bill was before the House. At that time only a relatively small sum out of a total of \$6 million was to be allocated to this program involving existing housing. In our judgment, this sum was not sufficient to do the job.

It was argued that in expanding the scope of the rehabilitation program to take into account all areas of the country there would be a greater onus on the government to provide the funds to fit the program which the people need. Unfortunately, in planning its housing policy this government all too often merely designates a small sum of money available and then tries to tailor the program around the money available. I think this is backward planning. In the development of housing policy we should look at needs first, and this is what the initial amendment which was put before the committee attempted to do.

I think there are grave dangers in continuing the area orientation of the rehabilitation program. I agree with my friends to the left that initially an attempt should be made to concentrate efforts in neighbourhood improvement areas. I do not want to be understood as having said that this is an entirely bad concept, but to put all moneys for the renovation and redevelopment of existing residential areas in the cities into one area, without allowing any other moneys to go outside those areas into the centres of some of the suburbs and to some of the rural and middle income areas of the cities is, I think, to continue a concept which is not conducive to a sound and lasting policy for the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock which is the general program before us at present. Therefore, I urge all hon. members to reconsider the matter before us and to defeat the amendment which has now been put by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat puzzled by the remarks made by the hon. member for St. Paul's (Mr. Atkey) because it seems to me, if I understood him correctly, that what he is proposing is contrary to the very clear, concise and, I think very practical suggestions made in the submission to the committee dealing with this act on April 10 of this year by Professor Michael Dennis who headed the study that led to this bill. In his submission Professor Dennis made it clear that we must do something that we have not done up until now. We must stop devoting the overwhelming part of our finances and efforts to the provision of homes for people in the middle and upper income brackets. He said specifically in connection with NIP programs that they should be restricted to housing for the people in the lower income brackets.

● (1540)

Let me put on the record a few of the suggestions made by Professor Dennis on April 10. I quote from page 6 of the