

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

The case of the boarded up houses on Normandy Road in Oakville was presented on a national magazine television show on Sunday night. This was also dealt with quite thoroughly in the March 10 issue of the *Oakville Daily Journal Record*. In 1947, there were 37 houses built for military occupation, 10 of which are to be demolished this year. Oddly enough these houses became vacant because of unification. The minister responsible for the unification program now finds himself with the new "hat" of housing on his head. He is faced with the problem of what to do with these 37 homes. The argument has been made that these homes are quickly deteriorating, as they were built originally to last 10 to 15 years.

When news of the projected demolition of these homes became known to people in Oakville, the housing shortage in that area became a very serious issue. A public spirited citizen, Peter K. McWilliams, Q.C., first brought the matter to the attention of the public. He wrote the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer) suggesting that these houses be rented on a monthly basis until there was a final decision on the total sale and redevelopment of that particular area. I would add that these houses could possibly be rented to people who could repair them when absolutely necessary.

In the Oakville paper to which I have referred, there have been references to people of humble circumstances who are forced to pay \$185 for the monthly rent of town houses, and who find that this is really more than they can bear. So, naturally they regard these boarded up houses as a solution to their problems, if only for the short term. Incidentally, the way we carry out our redevelopment schemes in Canada, it will probably take years before something new could be put in their place.

I hope the reply from the government side will be that some common sense has intervened and that these houses will be available at the monthly rentals suggested under the formula that Mr. McWilliams advanced. This would do something at least to ease the problem in Oakville.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, may I quote from a letter written by Mrs. Juliana W. Burns which appeared in the March 13 issue of the *Daily Journal-Record*. She is the wife of a man who earns \$90 per week and in her letter she says:

The houses we could have had are all above our heads rent-wise, when you consider that you have to pay for heat and hydro and the rent is

\$150 per month that is nearly three quarters of a working man's salary. At this rate we could hardly afford to feed and clothe ourselves, and this is not living, we are merely existing from day to day wondering where our next meal is coming from. We can't move in with relatives as there is no room and the town would only put us out anyway.

Surely there must be someone somewhere who has something to offer, all we want is half a chance to live normally.

Mr. Speaker, there is someone somewhere who could give the Burns family of Oakville a chance to live at a reasonable rental if only for a short period of time, and that person is the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer) or the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Cadieux). I hope the reply tonight will be favourable to Mrs. Burns.

Mr. Yves Forest (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer) reports that the question refers to 37 houses that were constructed in 1947 to house servicemen returning from World War II. The dwellings were designed and built for a life expectancy of from 10 to 15 years. Prior to completion of construction, the local military command entered into an agreement with Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to rent the houses to serving members of the armed forces. That arrangement is still in effect. But, because structural components are deteriorating at an alarming rate, to the point where some are already uninhabitable, and because our engineering reports indicate that rehabilitation would not be economical, a decision was taken that six houses, all of which are vacant, should be demolished.

The Minister of Transport's views on demolition, at a time when every available dwelling is so urgently needed, are well known. Hon. members will recall that the report of the task force made the point rather vigorously. Because of this, and the strong representations made by the hon. member for Halton (Mr. Whiting), the Minister of Transport has asked Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to engage the services of a firm of independent engineering consultants with instructions to make a further assessment of the physical condition of the houses, to advise us on the possibility of salvaging this living accommodation and, if so, the probable per unit and over-all cost.

Mr. Speaker: This house stands adjourned until two o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 10.21 p.m.