

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 3, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### PETITIONS

#### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

**Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table in both official languages, the government's response to 35 petitions.

*[Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.]*

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### HOUSING

#### PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMS

**Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)):** Mr. Speaker, between 1949 and 1985 the federal government developed a supply of over 205,000 public housing units which form an important part of our social safety net. Public housing provides low-income individuals and families with decent, safe and affordable shelter. The average family income of residents in this kind of housing is about \$11,000 a year.

The federal housing agency, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, in co-operation with the provincial-territorial housing agencies, has recently completed an evaluation of our public housing portfolio. For the first time we have detailed, accurate assessment of the conditions of Canada's public housing stock and the conclusion is that over all this stock is in good condition.

Perhaps more important the evaluation report indicates that the vast majority of the tenants in public

housing are generally satisfied with their residences and that their housing conditions have improved since moving into their current dwellings.

[Translation]

Nevertheless, there is room for improvement in some areas and we must see to it. The public housing stock is a very valuable asset for the country and must be preserved.

[English]

The 4,800 projects completed under the public housing program over the past 40 years are home to almost a half million low-income Canadians. Federal and provincial governments currently spend over \$800 million a year in subsidies on this important program.

[Translation]

The evaluation report concludes that the housing stock is generally in good condition, but repairs must still be made where necessary.

[English]

Some of the projects could benefit from redesign and redevelopment. As well, there is room for improvement in some property management practices to better meet the challenges of an aging portfolio and, finally, the report notes the potential for promoting a greater resident involvement in management of their own housing.

In the months ahead, I will be discussing these and other issues with our provincial and territorial colleagues and other interested parties as part of this consultation process.

This program evaluation is an important tool. It is important to take a step back and take a hard look at the performance of our programs from time to time.

The release of this evaluation report sets the stage for future policy consultation with public housing residents, provincial and territorial housing agencies, municipal and regional housing officials and the public in general.