

Supply

Canada must measure up to a standard conceived by a Government believing in centralist control.

This Government consulted, broadly consulted, with national and municipal groups. As a matter of fact, the Hon. Member put forward the argument that I did not pay any attention to CAHRO or the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Those very municipal groups, including CAHRO, put forward in their briefs presented to the Government and CMHC the proposal that all of the dollars expended under RRAP should be designed for social policy. That is exactly what we did when we designed the new directions for housing solutions in Canada. The figures the Hon. Member gives were from 1984 and 1985. She did not put forward the figures for 1986.

Ms. Copps: March of 1986, sorry.

Mr. McKnight: Or the number of units that will be built. If she will check the "blues" I am sure she will find that to be true.

I heard her mention something about the Government in Queen's Park and its enlightened policy. I recall that during the campaign there was a commitment for, I think it was 10,000 new units that would be put forward by the Government that is now in Queen's Park. There was an agreement between the federal and provincial Governments, between CMHC and the Ontario Housing Corporation, an agreement on cost sharing.

● (1250)

I would like to draw to the Hon. Member's attention to the fact that this year, with this enlightened policy of the Party that she supports, and I know that the people in Ontario are pleased that the fear of her becoming the Minister of Housing provincially has been removed, the Government of Canada—the taxpayers of Canada—will be providing 3,911 social housing units in Ontario. That enlightened Government in the Province of Ontario will be providing 2,159. The same applies when you consider co-op housing, rehabilitation, urban and rural, and when you look at rental, RRAP. The majority of the funding provided is provided by the taxpayers of Canada. There are increases, but I want the Hon. Member, when she replies, to be able to differentiate between RRAP, between public and private non-profit, between disabled RRAP, between rental RRAP, and also between the contributions that are made by the federal Governments and those of the provincial Governments in the new partnership we have entered into.

Ms. Copps: First of all the Minister should get his facts straight because the anticipated core need cut-offs for 1986 were provided by his own Department. If he disagrees with those figures I suggest he should stop cutting back on his staff and start getting some correct figures.

I would also suggest it is outrageous for the Minister to suggest that his new program is somehow going to assist people

ineligible for RRAP when one of the very first actions of his Government, under the tutelage of his Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) we did not hear a peep from the Minister responsible for housing who seems to be there as a buffer zone between reality and the Minister of Finance—was a 25 per cent cut-back in funding under the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program inflicted upon the Canadian people.

I have here a letter which was sent to an MLA in the Province of Saskatchewan who has been put on a waiting list in the Province of Saskatchewan because the federal government cut-backs have seriously hampered the effectiveness of the Rural Rehabilitation Assistance Program. I am happy that he raised the issue of the Ontario and federal Government initiatives, because the only province that had signed an operating and capital agreement when we entered into estimates on this issue in the last couple of weeks was the Government of Ontario. The Minister advised us at that time that he was going to be providing us with copies of all the agreements. We have seen nothing yet. In the same way, he has refused to provide us with information regarding how many Canadians across Canada have been refused RRAP funding specifically because of this Government's new definition of "core need".

I quoted the statistic that in the City of Winnipeg, for example, 60 per cent of the applications that had been approved under the previous criteria are now no longer eligible for RRAP funding. Likewise he will also know that CMHC guidelines allow a family of three to four people to live in a two-bedroom apartment. So the figure that I was quoting to him of 30 per cent or less of their income was, in fact, based on his own Department's definition.

It would seem to me that what the Minister should be doing is contacting his counterparts in the provincial Government, advising them that this Government still believes that we must have a national housing strategy for housing across Canada. In the Liberal Party we believe in a national strategy. We believe that somebody living in Gander-Twillingate should have the right to the same kind of adequate and affordable housing as someone living in the City of Toronto.

The Minister seems prepared without a whimper to pass off the responsibility to provincial Governments as a cost-cutting measure, because he does not really believe in a national social housing strategy. He would just as soon pass it off to provincial Governments, like the Social Credit Government in British Columbia which has shown quite clearly that it has no intention of continuing with the social housing strategy, but would rather pour all its money into the private sector so that they can assist in rent supplement programs without any kind of guarantees.

In fact, the only area where the Minister has taken any initiative—and I can see him chatting and laughing with the Minister of Finance because, in typical fashion, they are not interested. The Minister claims he cannot come to the private meeting because he is busy discussing important issues in the House, and yet when he is here he sits and laughs and chats