

BILL H.R. 7984

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REMARKS  
By Mr. Wolff of New York



**HON. LESTER L. WOLFF**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 1965

The House in Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 7984), to amend the provision of housing for low- and moderate-income families, to promote urban development, to improve the environment in urban areas, and to amend laws relating to housing, renewal, and community facilities.

Mr. WOLFF. Mr. Chairman, contrary to popular belief, this country, the land of the free and the home of the brave, this Nation of unprecedented wealth, is covered with blemishes.

Any cursory examination of the situation reveals pockets of slums, areas of decrepit housing and impoverished people who live in despair, people who are mired in the red



dropouts. One must look no further than the broken homes and welfare projects of the slum lords from distant environments who reap their wealth from the misery of others. This cancerous sore festers and engulfs surrounding areas, but it does not engulf whole populations. The vicious world of the slum spills over to people remote from these conditions, attacked by the products and influences of the slums. The crime which is rampant in the slums bursts forth in the headlines of murder, assault, and drug deals. Dares walk the back streets of our cities at night?

Mr. Chairman, the overriding theme of my decisions as a Representative shall always be to get at the cause of the problems that afflict us. Votes to slow down their growth—to offer vacant platitudes which at the most offer momentary respite—are not adequate. This body owes a responsibility, a duty, to hit at the cause and rid this country of this blight. We cannot afford nor must we allow the continuation of welfare as a nonvariable



of this country present or future. One

voted for the housing bill, and for section 101 which provides for certain subsidies for eligible poor families, because I feel that every path must be explored to get at the root causes of poverty and its attendant evils. The rent control program, by enabling poor families to live in adequate housing, may prove the key to free thousands of Americans from the crushing oppression of a life in the slums, the life from which no springs.

As for yesterday I was opposed to section 101 because I felt that people not entitled to this kind of help would benefit from it—the section itself was too broad. However, with the new amendment limiting only those who qualify for public housing eligible under section 101, restricting the program only to the indigent, and those currently living in slums, I felt that the measure compels support as a possible way for many of our people now living under the most wretched conditions.