

Mr. ST GERMAIN. It actually took you what seems to be the average time span, a 7-year span.

Since I am rather familiar with Hartford—I have a sister who taught there—we spend a lot of time in Hartford. Christmas time we were impressed with—what is it you call it—the shoppers mall.

Mr. Bliss. Constitution Plaza.

Mr. ST GERMAIN. We were very impressed with that, and aware of the work down there.

But actually, tell me, what type of urban renewal, these projects you have completed—have they been commercial, or have you gone into housing?

Mr. Bliss. The first three projects which actually combine to form Constitution Plaza were all commercial types. We are getting into the periphery of the areas of the city, and into neighborhoods now. We do have a high-rise housing development starting directly across from city hall. In three of the remaining projects, we do have a concentration of housing.

Mr. ST GERMAIN. You do have, as all other communities, a problem with substandard housing, do you not?

Mr. Bliss. Yes.

Mr. ST GERMAIN. Do you feel that you are giving enough attention to this problem as against the renewal, such as Constitution Plaza—a balancing off, in other words?

Mr. Bliss. Yes. I think there might be a little delay in getting into the residential area, but I think that consistent with the mayor's testimony, and consistent with the problem that faces the older, particularly eastern cities, it is absolutely a must to get into the core area, downtown, because I think this is where the investment is, this is where the libraries are, this is where city hall is, government services, the large stores—this is the key.

In our city, 80 percent of the revenue which goes to run the city has to come from the real estate tax, and probably about a third of that comes from the very, very small central business district. It is absolutely imperative that that be shored up economically before you could get to the peripheral areas, and really tackle the housing problem. So while we might have been a little bit late, I think if we were to do it over again, we would have to start the same way and at the same place.

Mr. ST GERMAIN. I might make this comment. We on the committee, those of us who are members, who support urban renewal, appreciate the dollars and cents factor involved. By the same token, I don't know about others, but I particularly feel when you see people in substandard housing, you also have a moral obligation which is very important. That's my concern. I do hope the city of Hartford is keeping this in mind also. There is a moral obligation to see to it these people are properly housed.

Mr. Mayor, do you have a comment?

Mr. KINSELLA. Yes, Congressman.

I would add to what Mr. Bliss has said. Most serious areas of decay in our city were in the area where Constitution Plaza now stands.

Mr. ST GERMAIN. Is this decay of commercial buildings you refer to?

Mr. KINSELLA. I am talking about residential. This was the oldest