

and receive, wages which naturally force the cost of goods up. Those of us not so fortunate have to pay for this.

I was pleased, Mr. Speaker, to see the old age pension increased to \$100 a month. I still feel, and I know it is the feeling of our party, that this pension should be geared to need. To my way of thinking, the very minimum for all old age pensioners should be \$110 a month, with the built-in protection that if the cost of living goes up, the pension goes up automatically.

We are divided into ten provinces, Mr. Speaker, and two great areas, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Also there are two other areas, those of the haves and of the have-nots. The have areas are growing like cancers. If the present trend continues, by the year 2000, or sooner, we will have to redraw the map of Canada and throw out the present provincial boundaries. The new map will consist of super areas such as Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Calgary and perhaps our capital city of Ottawa.

An hon. Member: And Edmonton.

Mr. Darling: All right. Call them what you will, city states, super cities or provinces, these concentrated concrete jungles will have 90 per cent of our population and as much or more of its wealth. The other area or province will be the entire balance of our country and could be named Canada. Let me say a word about redistribution. If we still have the same number of members in this House, those areas will be represented by 238 members and all the rest of Canada by 27.

Something has to be done, Mr. Speaker, to keep people in the rural areas and in towns and villages and to stop this erosion of population to the cities. The top priorities are, as I said before, jobs, housing and control of inflation. In rural Canada today our chief export and most valuable commodity is our young people. We pay to raise and educate them, and then they leave for the great rat race in the monster cities. In recent years some cities have had a twinge of conscience and are now willing to repay us by sending us, in return, their garbage. This pattern of growth means declining populations. It means the under-use of existing local and municipal services. It means an erosion of the municipal tax base. It means under-used school facilities. Something must be done to halt this and provide a way of life to the many people who want to remain in the regions where they were born and raised.

The backbone of the rural areas across our country is the small businessman and entrepreneur who is having a hard job getting by, in making a comfortable living, and who is paying the high wages now demanded and the many other high costs. He is also in a very serious financial position during certain periods of the year. In our particular area, where the economy is buoyant in the summer season, the lean months in the winter eat up the profits and he must borrow money at the bank and pay, in many cases, high interest rates. I feel that low interest rates should be available to these hard working and enterprising citizens who provide the great majority of employment in the many small villages and towns scattered throughout our country.

We have heard much said, Mr. Speaker, during the present session regarding the high water problem in the

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Great Lakes. The entire western boundary of my riding borders on Georgian Bay, and the high water is certainly a serious problem to many tourist and marine operators, as well as to cottagers. They have suffered considerable financial loss. I am hoping that this government will have sufficient funds set aside for emergencies so that it can make a worth-while contribution in conjunction with the province of Ontario.

Let me say a word about the LIP program, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that the money has now been overspent and a great many applications turned down, some of them very worthy. Having served as a member of a municipal government for a long period, it is my opinion that top priority should have been given to all applications submitted by municipal governments before projects submitted by private individuals or other organizations were considered. If money was left over, it could then have been divided among such individuals or organizations. It is my considered opinion that the elected officials of municipalities know their needs far greater than any individual or organization in the area. I will concede that many worth-while ones were approved.

• (2040)

I trust that all members of the House who represent constituencies on our coast will pay particular attention to this: they have been daily making life miserable and have been badgering the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) for the tabling of the long-awaited document known as the Darling report. Here it is, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure they will all be delighted with it.

I would be remiss if I did not indicate my pleasure at being able to sit in a parliament with so many colleagues from the Progressive Conservative party. At the same time, I would like to convey my respects to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). Although my colleagues and I may take exception to many of his policies, it is in keeping with the intended spirit of our parliamentary system that when he speaks we afford him the respect due Canada's first minister. I certainly take exception to the way he has been treated time and again.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Darling: There has been some doubt expressed as to the wisdom of removing the 11 per cent tax on building supplies. Some hon. members feel that such a measure would provide little relief for the lower income groups. It is true that outside of pure Marxism, equity is an elusive quarry. Nevertheless, repeal of the 11 per cent building supply tax would represent a significant reduction in the final price of a home and allow many more Canadians to own their own home. Apart from the obvious social benefit, a stimulus in the order of \$365 million would be injected into the economy. This stimulus, in conjunction with increased sales of building materials and related products, would serve both to boost this sector of the business community and to increase employment in all facets of the housing industry.

At the same time, this policy would serve to dampen the wage demands of workers who have come to view their jobs as uncertain and demand wage rates to compensate for their seasonal nature. This aspect of many of our