

matter concerning local rental laws. Let me say to the hon. member, as I have said to this committee on more than one occasion, that notwithstanding the fact that this is a matter of municipal and provincial responsibility, as the Minister of Finance indicated to the city of Hamilton and the city of Windsor, and as has been indicated to the city of St. Catharines, houses have been placed at the disposal of these cities from time to time in order that they might be used for the purpose of housing dependents of soldiers until other accommodation could be found. That is as far as the federal government has gone in that connection. It is all very well for my hon. friend to talk about this matter here, to ask if something cannot be done, and to speak of the plight of these worthy people, I am quite ready to take my share and more than my share of responsibility to help as far as I possibly can, but I do submit that there is some responsibility on my hon. friend, on the provincial government and on the municipal authorities. I do not think it should be all simply brought in here and put on the desk, and for us to be told that something should be done about it, regardless of the circumstances. We are doing something about it and have done something about it in a great many cases. Just here I should like to pay tribute to the community organizations in various cities which have done their level best to assist in finding housing accommodation for soldiers' dependents in these times when housing is so short. The attention, the thoroughness, the generous-heartedness with which they have gone into those cases have been remarkable, and I wonder if my hon. friend has referred this case to any of these organizations.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): For the benefit of the minister I may say that this has gone all through the process. It is not a question of getting another place in which to live; it is a question of breaking up a home which this man and his wife have had for nine and a half years. That is the situation.

Mr. RALSTON: I think I am just as sympathetic and just as open to any suggestions for assistance to a soldier or a soldier's dependents as my hon. friend is. He does not suggest that there should be a law under which a soldier's dependents would be entitled to keep the same house all the time. Surely that is not his suggestion?

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): We have at the present time a rental control order. Why can it not be extended to the soldiers?

Mr. RALSTON: Because, as I understand it, the rental control order provides for one

[Mr. Ralston.]

exception, namely the case where the owner desires to use the house. Of course if there is any fraud or evasion of the act or the regulations, it may be dealt with. But it would be dealt with in any event—not only in the case of a soldier, but in those of others as well. It is a matter of general regulation; it does not apply only to dependents of soldiers.

Mr. BENGE: The observations a short time ago of the hon. member for York-Sunbury, and the answers given by the minister were of much interest to me. I am referring particularly to those which had to do with accommodation in Ottawa, and the lack of accommodation for air force recruits.

I would take this opportunity to reiterate the stand I have taken in the past, and would request the minister now before the committee and other ministers concerned with the housing of service men, and the providing of training facilities and that kind of thing, to see that they effect more decentralization than obtains at the present time. Answering me last year on a similar question, the minister stated that it is all very well to make a suggestion of this kind. He pointed out that each department agrees with the principle of decentralization, but that he has found it difficult to have any of them agree that a particular department is the one which should be removed.

In Canada to-day we find ourselves in a position of cutting down in matters of training and administration. It seems to me, however, that as far as Ottawa is concerned there is a tendency to bring into this already over-bulging city more and more men for training and for purposes of administration. An example was given by the hon. member for York-Sunbury with respect to air force men who could not go into barracks, but who are in training for pilots. While this may not come within the minister's department, the same principle applies.

In other parts of Canada, and I refer particularly to Saskatchewan, steps are being taken to cut down training, and to cut down the number of training centres. In the same way, a decrease is being made in the number of training centres over which the minister now before us has supervision. For example, in Saskatchewan the training centre at Maple Creek has been cut out. My information is that the number of recruits at the basic training centre at Prince Albert, which at one time handled large numbers, has been cut down so much that there are practically no recruits there at all.

In connection with the matter of cutting down training centres in Saskatchewan I should like to ask the minister one or two questions, and to give consideration to a point which