

National Housing Act

members of this honourable assembly during the quarter century I have been in it have said to you, sir, and your predecessors, are the backbone of this nation. Yet, sir, as you and I traverse this country and see so many abandoned and neglected and not kept in repair homes, one sometimes wonders whether or not we are a people of the soil. That does not refer to the problem which is at present before the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe), who is charged with the responsibility of piloting through this house a bill which is far removed from trade and commerce, so far removed that I sometimes wonder how he can be a man of so many parts.

I want to make particular reference to a statement made a few moments ago by the hon. member for Brandon when comparing our position in this fair Canada of ours with the position that obtains in other dominions within the commonwealth. The hon. member said, as I recall it, that to the extent of 50 per cent New Zealand gives priority to the necessary materials used in the production of housing—nails, if you will, and any other necessary commodity—while Canada gives 100 per cent priority wherever it possibly can.

It was my happy privilege some few short years ago to observe and travel through the length and breadth of New Zealand and also some 14,000 miles through the Dominion of Australia. Naturally, Mr. Speaker, a Canadian thinks of our sister dominions down under, which he may be visiting, in terms of what obtains in his own community. When I think of the climatic conditions under which our cousins down under make their living and carry on their way of life, at the same time I think of the conditions under which we in this more northerly and not quite so temperate zone have to find our way of life.

It is a great privilege perhaps and to the advantage of our ordinary Canadian citizenship to apply nomenclature to ourselves which

says that we are strong men of the north. That condition does not obtain—I am thinking of housing—to the same degree with our empire associates living in zones not quite of the same nature as our own, north of the 49th parallel, where we must of necessity be strong men of the north. Down there the people live under tin roofs, without basements in their homes because there is no frost to lift their foundations. They harbour their cattle and what not out in the open twelve months in the year. But in Canada the conditions are such that we cannot have our breakfast in a room in which there is no floor under the kitchen table. Ours is a different climate altogether; and when my hon. friend the member for Brandon stated that New Zealand gives priority to the extent of 50 per cent on building materials as compared with Canada's 100 per cent, I ask my hon. friends to my left when they speak of New Zealand to be fair and remember the very different conditions that obtain in Canada.

On motion of Mr. Harris (Danforth) the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. MacNICOL: What will be the business for tomorrow?

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): Tomorrow we shall continue with the program outlined last night. We shall continue debate on the second reading of this bill, No. 280, to amend the National Housing Act, 1944, and if that is concluded, we shall take, but I cannot guarantee the order, the second reading of Bill No. 228, to amend the Excise Act, 1934, and the second reading of Bill No. 229, to amend the Customs Act, and resume the committee stage of Bill No. 300, to amend the Canada Shipping Act, 1934. If there is time left we shall go into supply on the estimates of the Department of Transport.

At six o'clock the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to standing order.