

I have quite a sheaf of correspondence on this Charleswood housing project, apart from what I have discovered at first hand myself. I do not intend to go into it all, but it does point out something about the values of the construction of these houses and the difficulties they are now having. They do raise one pertinent point, namely, that several officials are putting the pressure on these people to have them sign these agreements at these amounts of \$7,300. If they do not do so they will be asked to vacate on May 1, and that is less than two months from today. The people are now living in the houses on a rental basis of \$30 a month. They are told by these officials that if there is any difficulty about having them sign these agreements or vacate, the rent will probably be raised considerably per month to the present occupants of the house.

I know, from my own personal inspection of these places, that some of them are most unsatisfactory in the matter of construction. When I was there, some of the houses had a great deal of water in the cellar. The basements had heaved and the centre was cracked wide open, throwing the foundations out of line. Some of the buildings were really in bad shape at that time. In fairness to the department, I must say that a great deal of repair work has been done to houses in that unit, but many of the people are still unsatisfied. They think there should be a 100 per cent repair job done on all these houses before they are asked to sign an agreement to purchase the property. They are rightly entitled to that. They go farther, and a number of them ask for an independent royal commission. They claim that if such an independent commission were set up it should hold sittings in the larger centres throughout Canada. They mention, in particular, Winnipeg, because if the sittings were held there these people could get their own counsel and appear before such a body in Winnipeg. The same thing would apply to all centres across Canada where difficulties arise.

As a member of the committee on veterans affairs, I have heard of cases of a like nature in almost every province. To bear that out, I remember last summer I asked the minister a question, and probably some of these matters are still under investigation. In their complaints, many of these people point out that at this time the septic tanks have frozen up and the water has backed up into the basement. One can understand that this would cause an embarrassing situation to the people occupying these houses. They say that there is a great deal of danger from disease in the spring when warmer weather sets in.

As I have said, the cement floors in the basements have cracked and heaved from the frost and the water. There is a lot of water in that area at times, and the places are in an unsatisfactory condition. The carpentry work in many cases was very poor. Some of these chaps told me about their own relatives working on the job, chaps who had never done any carpentry work in their lives before. They had come in from the farms and were paid carpenter's wages, working on the construction on a cost-plus basis. Not knowing anything about the job, they did not hustle very much. They were greenhorns on the job.

I remember last summer that a resolution came before the veterans affairs committee, and I believe it was agreed to because a question was asked the minister respecting the resolution on August 5. The committee recommended that if the outside cost of the veteran's house had gone over \$6,000 the government should subsidize the excess up to at least 23½ per cent, and the minister said that the matter was still under consideration and would probably be dealt with at the next session. By that, he meant this session of parliament.

On motion of Mr. Ross (Souris) the debate was adjourned.

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

### Wednesday, March 5, 1947

The house met at three o'clock.

#### REDISTRIBUTION

##### CONCURRENCE IN FIRST REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Hon. C. G. POWER (Quebec South) presented the first report of the special committee appointed to consider Bill No. 18, to readjust representation in the House of Commons, and moved that the report be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

#### TAXATION AGREEMENTS

##### INQUIRY AS TO COST OF CARRYING OUT OFFERS MADE TO THE PROVINCES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. M. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): I wish to address a question to the Minister of Finance, notice of which I have given him. I should like to ask him how much the estimates would have been increased beyond two billions if they had included the