

the war on poverty. Granted, its actions were copied from the Americans; but here we have the government doing the very thing which will bring about poverty by curtailing building funds.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Hales: I have the figures before me for the month of April in my own locality. The Guelph N.E.S. office listed 22 males unemployed in the construction industry, at the very time of year when these people should be busy at their trade. But they are unemployed because of lack of mortgage funds.

I am told that only one out of every five applications for direct mortgages is being granted at present. That is how serious the situation is. I am told that the rich can get mortgage funds but that it is very difficult for the average working man to get a loan. It is true that loans are available for apartment houses. Other loans are available for large, luxurious office buildings; but is that what we need the most in Canada today? I say that we want money to build homes for individuals.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Hales: I am told that the large-scale builders can get loans, but the small builder, the man who builds five or ten houses a year is not able to get loans, and this is very serious for him. I am also told that large-scale builders who have reached the saturation point in their own areas are now moving into my own area to build houses, and that this is creating a real problem for the small builder.

I would recommend to the government that first and foremost it should not curtail by 15 per cent direct mortgage loans as compared with last year. They should provide the same amount of money as was available last year, especially at this season of the year. It should not postpone its decision on this until next winter or next fall. Now is the time when builders need and want mortgage money, and if the government wishes to impose this 15 per cent reduction it should postpone its enforcement until later on in the year. Let's get building—now.

There are many areas in Canada in which abnormal expansion and development are taking place. These areas need homes more than other areas. In this connection I think of my own community of Guelph, which is a university town, expanding at a great rate,

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bursting at the seams every place one looks. Yet additional loans are not being made available in this area. It receives the same amount of loans as other areas which are not expanding so quickly. I urge that more loans be made available, not necessarily residences for the university, but for university professors and others who wish to build their own homes in various parts of the city. There are many areas of Canada in the same position. There are areas in which great mining development is taking place, such as those areas in Saskatchewan where potash is being mined. There are many such areas as I have mentioned.

I am not so sure that money is so tight, because one member of the government the Secretary of State wants to spend \$6 million to buy a painting for the National Art Gallery. That \$6 million would build 300 \$20,000 homes or 600 \$10,000 homes. How tight can money be when people on the government front benches can talk in terms like that? If money is scarce maybe it is time we began operating on a priority basis. I think No. 1 on the list of priorities would be to put a roof over a man's head and give him a place in which to live. Believe me, Mr. Speaker, if this situation is not corrected, before long people are going to be living in tents. That is how bad it is becoming in some areas of the country.

If we are going to give some thought to a priority basis perhaps we should consider how easy it is at present to get loans to buy cars, appliances, and for travel at a time when money is being curtailed for loans to allow a man to build a home for his wife and family.

I am concerned about the married man with small children who may be earning \$85 to \$100 a week. Where is this fellow going to live? He cannot get into an apartment house because in many cases they do not accept young families. He cannot rent a house because there is a shortage of such accommodation. This is a mighty serious situation today and it applies in many areas across the country. At present I think those who desire to build, and need a loan, have to be in the \$6,000 a year bracket, receiving about \$120 per week income, in order to get a loan for a house costing approximately \$18,000. It is a serious situation and needs every ounce of thought and research that we can give it.