

projected from current trends and in the absence of major policy changes at any level of government.

Even today, the so-called Montreal-Toronto corridor is a nation dominating entity. Already it has 40 per cent of the Canadian population. Two thirds of all cheques cashed are cleared through those two cities, 75 per cent of all head office corporate assets are in them, and nearly 90 per cent of head office assets of financial institutions is to be found there. Manufacturing costs in them ripple through the nation. There is a tremendous interchange between them. For instance, each week at least 50,000 people move by railway, road or air between Montreal and Toronto. I think that hon. members will not need to be reminded of more to suggest the national economic and political possibilities if this area extends its position of power in the next 30 years. It may be a wise option, but I think we would all wish to dwell upon it.

To get back to some specific problems, let me point out that the housing demand over the next 30 years of unconstrained future would be more than four million units for the three cities of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. There would be three million automobiles in Montreal alone, or in Toronto, by the year 2000.

I notice that my time has elapsed, Mr. Speaker. May I have the consent of the House to carry on?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): The minister still has three minutes remaining to him. Is there agreement of the House to extending his time?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Andras: I would like to thank hon. members for their courtesy.

• (2:30 p.m.)

The next ten years will be the crunch period. The evidence of this is there. The postwar baby boom children are having families, with resulting pressures growing on family type dwellings in a trend that is emerging counter to the high rise building of recent years. Other factors are immigrants, 75 per cent of whom now come to Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, and internal migration from rural to urban centres, and from small urban to big urban centres.

The ever sharpening demand for scarce urban space that is created by this population growth sets up an inter-connected series of causes and effects which we have to learn to understand if we are going to cope. How many hon. members will not already recognize to some extent this scenario, where land becomes so expensive as to preclude all but extremely dense residential downtown living; families with children seeking single family dwellings will have to commute several hours each day; downtown areas becoming congested, polluted and noisy; higher taxes and yet higher land costs as suburbs sprawl further; industries fleeing to suburbs leaving the poor without access that they can afford to jobs, and the inner city without a necessary tax base; steady erosion of stable neighbourhoods; economic uncertainty facing core

dwellers; deterioration in the quality of their environment; creation of an increasingly explosive situation when people feel cheated and when they despair; increased segregation of economic classes with its resulting divisiveness in the community and between communities at a time when unity is this country's great need?

What really happens as a result of all this, Mr. Speaker, is that everyone's choice is diminished. The aged and the handicapped and the otherwise unemployable, who are the great bulk of the nation's poor, are trapped either in shameful housing in core slums or located unreasonably far out from the active life of the city that gives them interest. Land costs will spur the flight to the suburbs for those who can afford it, but then they will have to spend more leisure time commuting, and the more the suburbs expand the more the congestion on the commuter highways, and certainly the more congestion downtown. Higher incomes are diminished by higher taxes and by higher costs of urban goods and services. Pollution and sprawl, noise and congestion diminish one's aesthetic and health choices, and penalize the weak whose status we wish to improve.

Frankly, I do not know where the trade-off in all of this is. I do not know, and nobody I have talked to can tell me when the exact point is reached that a city is simply too big. I certainly do not propose what can or should be done to control city sizes. I have not computed all the national, social, economic or political implications. I do not have any hard alternatives or any preconceptions at this moment. At this point, this government and I see only some of the more evident problems, and they are enough to make us wish to co-operate with other levels of government to try to understand this process we are caught in, and to use it to help fashion the kind of Canadian environment that Canadians want. For there is another side to all these negative things that can happen, and that is the opportunity to direct and create living environments in the manner that we want, fashioning progress to our social ends rather than being overwhelmed by it.

Because we are young and relatively rich and our urban problems are not yet out of hand, we have opportunities that almost no other country has. I would like to think, and I do think, that this country will grasp those opportunities.

Mr. Stan Schumacher (Palliser): Mr. Speaker, as a member first elected in 1968, this opportunity to participate in a Throne Speech debate is another "first" in what has proven to be a long line of firsts for me over the past two years or more.

May I first congratulate the mover (Mr. Trudel) and the seconder (Mr. Douglas, Assiniboia) of the Address in Reply for the honour bestowed upon them, and say how much I admire their bravery for formally expressing thanks for this pretentious, and what now appears to be in many respects an irrelevant, document.

The first question that comes to me when considering the government's future program is: what is the justifica-