

the country roads, and he will find three or four houses vacant in every mile and a quarter. The reason is that during the war years our country population drifted to the cities. Industry was very attractive. Now, when the boys are coming back, the housing situation in the cities is such that accommodation cannot be obtained.

The boys who are coming back have saved one or two thousand dollars during their service and they will no doubt wish to purchase wartime houses. They will put up the \$2,000 of their earnings and will depend on industry to pay the monthly instalments, with the result that it will not be more than a few years before industry itself will be bogged down to the place where these instalments cannot be paid and most of the houses will be taken over by the mortgage companies or by those who are financing the houses. The boys will then be driven into the country where they belonged in the first place.

Farming is not as attractive as it should be. If it were, there would be no hesitation on the part of these boys about going to the country and starting in that line, and they could get houses easily. In a few years' time these boys will be driven to the country; the houses, as I have said, will be taken back by the mortgage companies, and at that time there will be plenty of housing accommodation in the cities. I believe that will be the situation five or six years from now.

Our economy should be such as to obviate the necessity of people being driven to the country. During the last four or five years farming has been much better than it was previously, and yet through these years we have received only about eight per cent of the national income, while we represent thirty or thirty-three per cent of the population. Until that condition is changed we shall be up against such things as wartime housing.

If the trouble were looked into at its source there would be no need of this programme. We would not need to spend all this money because there would be sufficient housing in the country. The population has not increased. If things were as they should be we would have the boys back in an industry where they could make an honest and independent living.

Mr. MacNICOL: I went to Longueuil some time ago to see one or two of the Faircraft houses, so called, and the man who showed myself and others through one of the houses said that it had been put up in one day by six men working eight hours. The

minister is familiar with the houses I mean. The price was \$3,200. Two weeks afterwards I visited Montreal and saw one of these houses in a park opposite the Windsor hotel, and on inquiry I was told that the price was \$4,000. It was the very same house as far as I could see. If these houses are of the same type, are they available in quantities and, if so, can they be purchased in quantities and put up in the length of time stated? If so, why are more of them not being used to meet the housing problem?

Mr. HOWE: I have no intimate knowledge of Faircraft houses. The selling price is \$3,300 f.o.b. plant.

Mr. MacNICOL: I said \$3,200; it may have been \$3,300.

Mr. HOWE: The builder must acquire the land and build the foundation for the house. The cost of erection is not much, but that also has to be added. The result is that the house on site costs something over \$4,000; just how much more I am not sure. Wartime Housing has built a few. I believe they are coming off the assembly line at the rate of two or three a day. There is a ready market for them. Wartime Housing bought perhaps fifty or sixty of them for erection in Montreal close to the plant. I think they are a satisfactory house. I doubt that they are as good value as the house built on site, if we eliminate the fact that we can get them quickly, however, that is a matter of opinion.

Mr. MacNICOL: Later on, I visited a part of the country with which the minister is equally well acquainted, namely, the Atikokan area. At Atikokan I learned that they are going to erect fifty of them for the men working in the mines. From the information I received they are warm and comfortable places.

Mr. HOWE: I think they are.

Mr. MacNICOL: They appear to be well equipped. I wondered whether that would be one method of relieving the housing problem.

Before I sit down I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Huron North. He gave a really sensible talk. There was a great deal in what he said. Anyone driving through the country will see here and there many vacant houses. I believe that at the last session of parliament when the matter was up I suggested that an effort be made to try to persuade numbers of the Toronto people to go out to the many houses which are vacant in the small villages north of Toronto. Of course it would be necessary for them to be on some bus or rail line to get into the city