

I known orderly decontrol is the intention of the government or the intention of the board, but it is so difficult to work out that it becomes not orderly but disorderly.

The situation is of course further complicated by decontrol in the United States. The lifting of controls there has further complicated the problem of the business community here in various ways and contributed to the situation whereby we have the anomaly of high employment and scarcity of many necessities. All the indications are that delay from now on in removing controls will cause constantly increasing difficulties. The moral of this is that the sooner these hindrances to production can be removed, the sooner we will get the advantage of free and full production. Until then we shall have the constant irritation of a series of price rises. We should now be at or near the place where we can deal courageously with the remaining domestic controls. Export controls, rents and things of that kind may be quite different matters. The retention of such controls as these in modified form can be justified.

I come now to a matter about which the government has heard a good deal during the last two or three years, one which I am sure has been one of very great concern to them; I refer to the question of housing. Housing has become a drab and dreary tale of promises, plans and programmes; there has been everything but a policy which produces houses. In a country equipped with the best materials in the world and trained for generations in the construction industry, the government's housing record is a disgrace.

The speech from the throne says:

Despite all obstacles, the number of housing units completed in 1946 approximated the objective set by the government.

What objective is the government talking about? Is it the political objective set in the summer of 1945, and, if not, which one of the statements made by different ministers of the crown represents what the objective of the government was or is? To say that you have reached some named objective does not satisfy anyone. So long as you have families living in garages and returned soldiers seeking emergency shelters, your housing problem remains as it was, a flop.

An advertisement authorized by the federal Liberal campaign committee for Ontario, June 7, 1945, said this:

We are planning for at least 600,000 new housing units and perhaps 1,000,000. No matter where you live, you will be able to reside in a comfortable home of which you can be proud.

The Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Mackenzie) said at Brandon, on January 24, 1946:

We can truthfully say that in this country at least the worst is past.

Then six months later, on July 22, 1946, we find the Minister of Reconstruction (Mr. Howe) saying in the House of Commons:

We can anticipate by spring, 1947, an immediate housing deficit of some 180,000 units or a worsening of the situation by some twenty per cent.

And what do we find just two and a half months ago? On November 12, 1946, the war veterans met the Prime Minister, and perhaps other members of the government, and what did they say? I will just mention one or two things. They said:

Housing is a major problem in Canada to-day, and likely to become worse before becoming better.

It went on:

Results will inevitably be disastrous unless drastic steps are soon taken, first, to increase the production of building materials and supplies in certain critical lines; second, to increase building trades apprenticeship training as the means of increasing the supply of skilled labour and third, temporarily to ban non-essential building in favour of essential building as the only practical means of ensuring a balanced programme of operation for the construction industry as a whole.

Now we have the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell) getting into it and bringing the government's promises up to date. He carries us to 1951 when he says all will be well. Here is what he says, as reported in the *Ottawa Journal* of January 16, 1947:

There seems to be every reason to believe that 400,000 to 500,000 units of housing can be absorbed readily in the five years ending 1951 . . . It seems to me that, in a long term view, we should make every effort to establish as a permanent feature of our economy a high annual production of residential construction.

We agree with the Minister of Labour as to the need. We want the houses, but 1951 is a long time away.

I come to another matter which has been a subject of discussion in the press and elsewhere in considerable detail for a couple of years, and in less detail for ten years, and which is one of the major domestic problems of this country. I have reference to the question of dominion-provincial fiscal relations. That question cannot be dealt with briefly. I do not want to deal with it exhaustively to-day, but it is so important that no leader of the opposition should finish his speech without some considerable reference to it.

It is almost ten years since this government made its first move in this matter. There were other minor moves before, but that was