

What I am trying to get at is this: the bill only covers the little fellow, the man who is receiving an income of \$2,000 or \$2,500 a year and who wants to get married or buy a half section of farm land. I do not think this legislation hits the honourable senators from Vancouver (Hon. Mr. McKeen), Toronto (Hon. Mr. Hayden), Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) or Provencher (Hon. Mr. Beaubien). It does not worry people who own their own homes; it only affects the little fellow. I think we should give attention to bigger accumulation of capital.

I recall that from 1942 to 1944 good houses were selling for only \$8,000. In fact, I once sold the house in which I am now living for \$8,000, but the man who bought it could not meet the payments and I had to take it back. Well, the other day I refused \$14,000 for it, and the prospective purchaser was willing to pay me a little over \$14,000 if he could get immediate possession. Credit has forced up the purchase price of houses. The minute the government adopts a credit system it should cover the whole field.

I notice that in connection with the National Housing scheme the government claims it is only going to lend money on the basis of the prices which prevailed before the latest increase in the cost of lumber. A young man wrote to me the other day and told me he had to pay \$4,000 for a second-hand combine. That is a lot of money.

Hon. Mr. Euler: What did he buy for \$4,000?

Hon. Mr. Haig: A combine.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: A combination thresher—

Hon. Mr. Euler: I know what it is.

Hon. Mr. Haig: I appreciate the arguments advanced by my honourable friend from Rosetown (Hon. Mr. Aseltine), but like the senator from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Hayden) I believe that this struggle is far more serious than most people seem to think it is. This is the third time in the present short session that I have expressed that opinion. I fear that the people of Canada are not awake to the threat that we face right now. We are going to have to cut down our standard of living and our scale of expenditures, and there will have to be some restrictions on our free and easy way of life. Canada is a great country and the standard of living here is high. Our people are noted for their hospitality, and living accommodation is good for a young country of only 14 millions. But as somebody said the other day—I think it was the senator from Churchill (Hon. Mr. Crerar)—there is something more precious than all that.

Like the member from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Hayden), if I thought the passage of this bill would in the slightest degree help to protect the liberty that we Canadians enjoy, I would vote for it, even though I appreciate the arguments of my honourable friend from Rosetown (Hon. Mr. Aseltine) and others.

The senators from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) and Toronto (Hon. Mr. Hayden) apparently have a good deal of influence with the administration—they speak on all important government measures—and I would suggest that they urge the appropriate minister to make a study of all prices that have been increased and see whether some reduction cannot be made in them. I think it is safe to say that rarely does anyone of us now ever receive a letter which does not complain about the high cost of living. Regardless of the part of the country in which the writer lives, if he is a thinking person at all he will mention how high butter has gone, or sugar or tea, or tires, or some other commodity.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: Or beef.

Hon. Mr. Haig: Beef is a luxury which only few can now enjoy, and then only in very small quantities.

Hon. Mr. Quinn: Except in Toronto.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: How about Blaine Lake?

Hon. Mr. Haig: I am not too critical of Toronto. It is probably a pretty nice place, but of course not half as good as Winnipeg.

I urge the government to make a study of the prices of goods in general and try to find some way of curbing the rise in the cost of living, so that the wage earner, farmer, fisherman, bushworker—in short, the ordinary small man—may be able to live decently under present conditions in Canada.

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson: Honourable senators, I would not take strong issue with some of the points made by the leader of the opposition (Hon. Mr. Haig). I of course agree with him that this bill attempts to deal with only one phase of the problem of the steadily rising cost of living. I agree also that under this particular bill it would be desirable to take whatever measures should be taken so as to regulate consumer credit. He criticized, among other things, the amount of credit extended for the building and purchase of homes. I feel that when action is being taken under this bill the government should make regulations governing the terms on which credit may be obtained for these purposes, and I believe the minister has already intimated that this will be done.