

article by B. T. Richardson which appeared in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* of November 4, 1942:

The American intention of considering geographical distribution is based, in part, on the policy of devoting the best and most efficient facilities to war production. This is a factor that has not been raised in Canadian discussion of concentration so far, and there are obvious compelling reasons why, if war production is concentrated as it is in the Ontario-Quebec region, remaining civilian production should be concentrated in other regions such as the west. In other words, the basic or nucleus plants remaining in civilian production should be the plants outside the main war production area, as much as possible.

The men and women who have left our province to come to eastern Canada and create the congested situation which obtains in cities such as Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton, and the men and women who, being in the armed services, necessarily have moved to other parts of Canada and other parts of the world, will in the greater number of instances be returning to their homes after the war. I am sure that the citizens of Ottawa would not like to see a continuation of the present overcongestion; they expect these people to move; and other cities where congested areas exist expect the same. When the men and women in the armed services come home we want to have something for them to come home to. We want to be able to supply them with employment: we want so to build up our communities in the meantime that they will be worth coming home to. But if the present system of denuding our country of its population and entirely overlooking its right to a fair share of the war effort is to continue, they will have nothing to come home to, and this country will be faced with the greatest economic headache it has ever had.

In that connection, I was pleased to note that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell) had come back from his recent trip to Great Britain with a point of view to some extent similar to my own. He had reference, I believe, to labour when he made the statement I have in mind, but his remarks apply also to industry and the other matters to which I have referred. This is taken from the Canadian Press of November 7:

My observation is that this tremendous programme—

He is referring to the man-power policy over there.

—perhaps the most important phase of the war effort on the home front, could not have been administered so effectively unless the British had resorted to the principle of decentralization.

Mitchell said he learned that if headquarters of the labour ministry were destroyed by bombing, the eleven regions into which the country is divided could carry on without difficulty.

[Mr. Bence.]

"Surely if decentralization is desirable here it is all the more needed in Canada with our vast distances," he said. "I intend to work in that direction for I believe the British experience in this matter points the way for solution of many of our problems."

I suggest that in addition to the work in connection with the regional offices the administration of labour should, as far as it is possible for them to do so, endeavour to decentralize war-time production and production for ordinary consumer use.

These are important things as far as war work is concerned; but I see no reason why, in addition to spreading out war work and giving us a fair opportunity to perform such work in our part of the country, there should not be some spreading out as far as administration is concerned. May I refer again to the fact that we are continuing to build temporary buildings in Ottawa. According to reports, the authorities are going to erect another building, No. 9, which is going to cost \$350,000, and yet we are told that we cannot have erected in the city of Saskatoon a very necessary naval barracks which would cost probably \$100,000 because we have not the materials and cannot get priorities. Why have we not the same right to the construction of administration buildings there? We can do work that is commensurately as important and commensurately as good there as here. Why in the world should we not be given an opportunity to erect our building, which is badly needed, as they are given here to erect No. 9 temporary building in Ottawa, or Hull, or wherever it is to be, at a cost of \$350,000? Communication is no bar. Someone may suggest that the city of Saskatoon is a long way from here. The Prime Minister himself the other day referred to the fact that communication was so simple now that there was no need of an empire war cabinet, because the government could communicate with London with the greatest ease. Well, Ottawa could communicate with Saskatoon or Regina or Calgary or Edmonton or any of the other cities out in the west with equal facility.

Not only are our people being taken from us; not only are they being brought to eastern Canada, in many instances under intolerable conditions, but at the same time we get a slap in the face by being told that we shall lose four seats in our representation from Saskatchewan and three seats in our representation from Manitoba. And in the speech from the throne it has been stated that a special committee will be set up for the purpose of considering this problem, and for the purpose, I presume, of making a redistribution. Already the newspapers are full of speculations as to what particular district will gain a seat. The