

*Supply—Labour*

• (4:30 p.m.)

Another thing for which we have been asking, though I know our request has fallen on deaf ears, is a ministry of housing and urban affairs staffed by a full-time minister. How in heaven's name can you expect a man to tackle the greatest social problem that we have when he is constantly beset with the problems of labour? Perhaps he does do a good job in that field. I do not know and there are other opinions, but certainly the minister cannot perform both tasks.

What is the use of educating our children and spending billions of dollars to that end if they and other people of Canada are not adequately housed? There is no possible way of solving the problem except by the appointment of a minister of housing and urban affairs. I say this because the greatest problem that we are going to face in the next 20 years is what I call the urbanization of Canada. We are becoming a country of city dwellers. Before very long 80 to 85 per cent of our people will live in cities or in great metropolitan areas. I see the minister nodding his head in agreement.

The housing crisis is an obvious one, Mr. Chairman, because it is the first problem that epitomizes the dilemma of urbanization. But it is only the first problem. Other enormous problems loom ahead such as sewage disposal, water pollution and transportation, as well as cultural problems. The difficulties that lie ahead are fantastic and housing is but the first problem we run into. We have not solved it yet; indeed, we have not even got down to the business of solving it.

Three years ago I made a speech on housing in the course of which I analysed in great detail the housing question and recounted some of the short-term and long-term measures. At that time I pleaded with the minister to appoint a royal commission on urbanization which could travel across the country and find out what our needs are going to be, what type of housing will be required, where it will be built and what type of financing will be necessary. I asked the minister to set up a royal commission so as to provide a blueprint for the next 20 years.

We are fighting in the dark, Mr. Chairman. We do not have the statistical background which is required to analyse the whole broad spectrum of urbanization in this country. Nothing has been done in this regard, of course, because none of us really expected it to take place. If the minister had foreseen this event we would be in a position today to

[Mr. Scott (Danforth).]

decide what kind of problem we face and to put forward possible solutions. Instead we are wallowing around with the crisis becoming worse every day and the actions of the federal government becoming less every day, in spite of what the minister says.

My remarks being of a general nature, I also want to remind the minister of this facet. Three years ago I pleaded with the minister to get away from the C.M.H.C. boys, to travel across the country instead of letting them surround him with their phony statistics which they use to buttress their entrenched position. I suggested that if the minister did this he would be in a better position to analyse the problem. At that time I told him I envied him. When he became Minister of Labour and part time minister of housing I said he would have the chance to change the face of this country. That would have been his mark, I suppose, certainly his memorial. However, this did not happen, and we on this side of the house are very disappointed in the minister, likeable though he may be. The minister has not been a successful minister in the field of housing.

There are many other things one could say, Mr. Chairman. For example, the minister quoted from the report of the Economic Council. For years we were told that when we talked about housing we were indulging in a lot of partisan politics, that we were just taking advantage of the situation. I do not know how the government can say that now. The report vindicates the position that all parties in the opposition have taken over the years. The report tears to shreds the housing program of the government. It shows it to be nothing less than inadequate, shortsighted, lacking in planning, lacking in financing—in short, lacking everything that is required for a proper housing program. The report of the Economic Council is not the product of partisan politics. It carries the weight of the most responsible group in Canada which we in this chamber created. It makes clear that there is no housing program at Ottawa at all.

The minister also talked about mortgages. For years we have asked both him and the government to create some sort of regular source of mortgage funds. One of the problems of my builder clients is that they never know whom to approach for funds. In Canada mortgage money has been turned on and off like a tap in order to meet economic needs. The Economic Council points out that housing has been treated as a pump primer and it is severely critical of this fact. When things look bad a billion dollars of mortgage