

could not have been built in these homes. The digging of the basements would not have used materials which were necessary or vital to the war effort. They could have been excavated by a couple of bull-dozers in a week, and the addition of basements would have given the occupants a sense of permanency which they will never have. We are told that these are only temporary structures. Well, it is a rather expensive undertaking if these are only temporary structures, for we are spending \$30 million this year on such buildings. But the committee knows that there is nothing temporary about them. They are built and they will stay there. In the same area there were homes built allegedly on a temporary basis after the last war and they are still there. They were built without basements, and the people have had to excavate basements for themselves in the course of the years. After the houses have been constructed it is ten times as difficult to dig a basement. Worse than that, the specifications call for insulation which is not at all like those of normal houses in Winnipeg. There are no doors on the cupboards, and that is a cheap and unnecessary sort of economy. There are wooden eavestroughs. Perhaps that may be necessary in time of war when metal and zinc were short, but I hope that wooden eavestroughs are not going to continue. There is no power wiring. The expenditure of another \$30 per building would have put power wiring in these houses. When you have no power wiring you have this result. A woman would have seen this; most men would pass it up. In the summer time you have temperatures of eighty or ninety degrees in the shade. If you want hot water for a bath you have to put on the kitchen range or the stove; that is the only possible way you can get hot water in these houses. Because we are chiseling to the extent of \$30 on power wiring, we are putting people to all sorts of inconvenience and discomfort.

What is more, these houses do not meet the specifications laid down by the by-laws of the city of Winnipeg and, heaven knows, they are not too strict as things are now. But wartime houses come nowhere near the by-laws. Objection has been taken to that fact, but we were told we have to get houses and the only way we can get them is to take this offer of Wartime Housing. The city council said: "We cannot argue; we have to take what we can get." For the expenditure of another twenty-five per cent these houses could have been made permanent structures. I think it is a very poor form of economy indeed to build such homes. As it is, I am certain that they

[Mr. Stewart.]

are going to descend into hovels and eventually into slums. The objection that has been raised to the houses in the particular areas in which they are built has been raised by working-class people who do not object to low-rental housing and who do not object to cheap dwellings. After all, their own boys and girls are going to settle in these homes. In this community as in other communities we find that through the years the people have been industrious and frugal. They have saved a little money; they have managed to establish an equity in Canada. They have bought their own homes. Now they find, cheek by jowl with houses which they have built, these wartime structures which everybody is convinced will not last. I know soldiers who have applied for them. They have done so for one purpose only, and that is to get shelter for themselves and their families, and then to get out of them just as fast as they can. They are houses in which the tenants are going to take no pride at all. When people take no pride in their homes we know what happens.

There is another point on which I should like an answer from the minister to-night. I brought it up before, but he was not here at that time; perhaps he missed it. Wartime Housing put out a long questionnaire. There are many questions on the form. There are two questions which are entirely unnecessary, and I should like to see them knocked out if it has not been done by now. One question is: "What is your nationality?" The other question is: "What is your religion?" The men who are getting these houses are the men who fought for Canada. They fought overseas as Canadians. They were not Jews or Gentiles, Catholics or Protestants, believers or unbelievers; they were Canadians, fighting for Canada. They died for Canada in the same way and were buried in a common grave, united at last in the common bond of death. I think it is atrocious that any government department should have the audacity to put these questions on any form such as that which Canadian soldiers have to answer. I only hope that the minister to-night will tell this committee that these two vicious and iniquitous questions will be knocked out of the questionnaire.

Mr. HOWE: I should like to ask my hon. friend if he knows of any case where the information given was used to the detriment of the man who gave the information?

Mr. STEWART (Winnipeg North): I know of no case where the information was used to the detriment of any man. But why are these questions in there if they are not for a discriminatory purpose? I do not say they are.