

*The Address—Mr. Skey*

house is aware that Ontario is providing additional credits for those who build houses under the National Housing Act to the extent of \$1,000 per unit. They have also special conditions for veterans. This pamphlet reports that Ontario has been forced to guarantee municipally sponsored rehousing schemes up to a limit of \$15 million. The province will grant \$300 per lot to veterans housing programs; and the province will guarantee building development corporations up to \$2 million. Loans on 10,000 dwelling units will be guaranteed up to an aggregate sum of \$10 million.

Here we have the provincial governments wrestling with a problem in connection with which it seems to me they have practically no help from the federal government, up to the present time. I am sure British Columbia is having the same problem but I have no information on that province at hand. However I make the statement because I do not want hon. members to think I am speaking only as a Toronto urban member, because I know the problem is one which extends from coast to coast.

When the Progressive Conservative party met in national convention in October last we recognized this situation as an emergency. In our platform we wrote several planks on the subject, one making provision for the extension of the National Housing Act, the second making provision for an extensive research by the government on buildings costs, and the final one a recommendation of dominion-provincial-municipal co-operation in tackling the problem. I believe there is no one in the house today who does not realize that all three levels of government are involved.

When a national highway became a political issue, the federal government was quick enough in calling a conference of the provincial premiers to discuss this worth-while project, one which I favour, but one which in my opinion is not nearly as important in our national life as is the housing problem in the cities of Canada. I should like to see the federal government call a housing conference and back to the limit its Minister of Reconstruction and Supply (Mr. Winters) at such a conference, giving him power to negotiate with the provinces and municipalities in order to find a solution—not just to produce a nice draft of what can or cannot be done. I should like to see this problem really tackled, so that Regent park would not be the only housing project in Canada that has been developed as a co-operative venture by the dominion, the province and the municipality. We are proud that the city council of Toronto have carried out the Regent park development, the

[Mr. Skey.]

only one of its kind in Canada. But it is a shame that it is the only one; it is a shame that this type of co-operation has not been extended to other communities, as well as in our own, in an endeavour to deal with this urgent national problem.

I have completed my remarks except to say that I hope the new minister of reconstruction will succeed. I hope he will be permitted to meet with the provinces and the municipalities in a conference of the type I have described. There is no doubt that he understands the problem because he said so in Toronto when he spoke there on February 22. But he must do more than understand it; he must fight it and beat it. I hope the government will put its full financial strength behind his department and that we will make the same rapid progress in this field that we were able to make when we turned out munitions of war during a time when we faced a national crisis.

(Translation):

**Mr. Maurice Gingues (Sherbrooke):** Allow me to join those who have already spoken in congratulating the mover and the seconder of the address in reply to the speech from the throne, which is now under discussion. The hon. member for Essex West (Mr. Brown), who is already an old hand in parliament, displayed much talent in moving the address, and the new member for Laval-Two Mountains (Mr. Demers) showed that his constituents have selected as their representative a man of worth, a man who will surely succeed in Canadian politics.

I also wish to join those who believe as I do that the best parliamentary system is the two-party system and congratulate the new leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew). Although I do not share his views, I hope that he will hold that office longer than his predecessors.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to speak on behalf of the people who live in that beautiful Quebec district which is called the eastern townships, to congratulate one of our fellow citizens on his success and to thank him for the great honour he is bringing to our wonderful region.

I should like more especially to tell you, Mr. Prime Minister, on behalf of the Borromians, that is the former pupils of St. Charles Seminary, that the professors, the former students and all the pupils of the seminary have been proud of you at each stage of your brilliant career as a lawyer and as a statesman. But on the day when you were sworn in as Prime Minister of Canada, the rejoicing was complete "on the top of the high hill"; the joy was ecstatic; your alma mater was jubilant.