

durable peace in the world. Without security, there is no use dreaming of development and prosperity, since all that would be wiped out once and for all were another cataclysm to break out. Let us pray Divine Providence to spare us from such a calamity and let us be confident.

The sincerity, integrity and nobility of soul of the Prime Minister, acknowledged and appreciated by everyone at home and abroad, have made of him an authoritative and respected apostle of good will, of understanding, of unity and of peace, not only within the Canadian nation but among the free nations of the whole world. Canada owes him an irrevocable debt of gratitude for everything he has done for our country.

At home, notwithstanding the shadows cast by various fluctuations and difficulties in some sectors of the economy and by increased regional and seasonal unemployment, the general picture is good and prospects most encouraging.

Last September, there were 109,000 people without work drawing unemployment insurance benefits, a large number, it is true; but it should be noted that during the same month more than 5,100,000 persons were occupying remunerative employment in Canada.

But there is some feeling of unrest and there are those who really fear an economic recession and general unemployment. The Government is conscious of these problems, and is therefore seeking a solution to those coming under its jurisdiction. For instance, to avoid unemployment, the Government proposes that public construction projects already approved be accelerated, and asks Parliament "to make financial provision for construction in the programs of various departments and agencies on a scale that will make possible a substantial increase in the total expenditures for this purpose."

The Speech from the Throne indicates, moreover, that the Government intends to introduce "immediately" a legislative measure designed to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act in order to increase the duration and scale of supplementary winter benefits.

The Government "is also proposing to introduce, during the session, broader amendments designed to make unemployment insurance a more effective instrument in providing financial support to unemployed workers".

These measures, as well as others of no less importance mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, clearly demonstrate the care with which the Government is doing everything in its power to help all those householders, Canadian men and women who, through the force of local or temporary circumstances, might not find work.

Another measure, which has both an economic and a social effect and which is mentioned in the Speech from the Throne—and the advantages of which the province of Quebec has unfortunately not made as much use of as its sister provinces—is the act approved by the House of Commons on March 8 last, providing for the construction of new houses, repairs to and modernization of existing houses and also for the improvement of housing and living conditions.

With regard to this act, the Speech from the Throne declares that it "has been an important factor in stimulating the construction of a record number of houses in the past year" and that "the prospects are favourable for a high level of house building in 1955."

Judging from the marvellous results obtained the very first year, the hopes entertained for the year 1955 are certainly not too sanguine.

In a public statement made recently, the honourable Minister of Public Works, Mr. Winters, gave significant figures, which show beyond any doubt what a strong impetus the new act has given to house building. May I be allowed to quote a few.

In the course of 1954, the building or remodelling of 110,000 to 115,000 houses was started, while it was completed in the case of 104,000 to 108,000 houses, which represents a considerable increase over any other year in Canadian history.

The present number of houses which we are starting to build is even higher. Taking into account average seasonal changes, we start building 120,000 houses each year, that is about 380 on every working day of the year. The number of new houses started in October 1954 alone reached 12,600, which represents an increase of 22 per cent over the same month in 1953.

It might be interesting to glance over the volume of loans made under the Housing Acts in 1953 and 1954 in relation to the whole housing program for each of those years.

In 1953, exclusive of conversions, construction of 102,000 houses was started throughout Canada. The building of 40,000 houses was approved for loan purposes under the National Housing Act, that is somewhat less than 40 per cent of the total number of houses on which construction was started. In 1954, the number of houses started being about 110,000, exclusive of conversions, it is expected that about 52,000 housing units will be built under the National Housing Act. According to this figure, it would seem that from 1953 to 1954 and even before then, the total increase in the housing program has been carried out under the National Housing Act. The number of