

National Housing Act

These bottlenecks should be discovered and exposed mercilessly. There should be broadcasts telling the people of Canada exactly who, in the province of Manitoba or Ontario, or in any other given province, is holding the building program up, and why. I think that sort of publicity would soon produce a co-operative attitude which now is far from existing. There is too great an indisposition to co-operate throughout Canada.

People have failed to realize that housing is a Canadian problem, a problem that affects every individual of every province. It affects the provinces as well as the dominion government, and no agency in Canada can be expected to solve it if all the people of Canada do not get behind that agency and give the assistance needed.

Certain objections will be raised to the plan I offer. I fancy I shall hear someone say that it will cause inflation if we render available millions of dollars to the people to build their own houses. Well, did not the minister the other day call for the entry of private enterprise into the housing picture? If the dominion government, let us say, were to lend \$500 to a young couple with which to build a house, how could there be any more inflation in that procedure than there would be if a private company spent the \$500 in building the house? The money would go out into circulation just as thoroughly in one case as in the other. Therefore, if it were sound for private enterprise to build houses so far as inflation is concerned, it would be sound for the federal government to provide the money for the houses for the people.

My proposal may be said to impair the position of those who have invested in housing. I can imagine a good many people who have spent large sums of money saying: Well, if the government does that it will ruin our investment. I do not believe that. The people who would be aided by the building proposals which I have made, would be people who will not be able to buy or rent without the help I propose. How it could possibly affect those who had money invested in housing I fail to see when less fortunate people are now unable to rent their houses.

It will be argued that this kind of proposal will prejudice the position of labour. I like to see labour protected; I like to see their interests safeguarded, but these little low rental houses and these cheap houses for ownership by the people are not now being built anyway. The government, in helping the people to build their own houses, would certainly not be depriving labour of any of the work which they would now be able to get. The government would be simply pro-

[Mr. Blackmore.]

viding for building the houses that labour is unable to build at the present time. I fail therefore to see how my proposals would prejudice the position of labour.

It will be argued that my proposals would seriously affect the wholesalers and retailers. I have suggested that the government, in co-operation with the provincial and municipal governments, buy directly from the producers the materials which are to be used, the cement and other things, for the building, and distribute them wholesale. Why it would be argued that the wholesalers would be hurt thereby I fail to see, because the people for whom we would be providing for building the houses are people who would not be able to buy the materials from the wholesalers and retailers anyway. It is the underprivileged people about whom we are concerned.

I would say this in a general way: The Canadian people everywhere must realize that the housing problem must be solved—and, "must" is the word. It is simply idle prattle to be everlastingly talking against communism and allowing the continuance of a housing condition, which is breeding communism every day. Why not be realistic about this thing? People must come to realize that a solution can be found only through the co-operation of all those concerned, which includes all governments, dominion, provincial, and municipal.

Finally, the people must learn that they must supplement the efforts of governments by community and co-operative action such as was common among our fathers in days long ago. The service clubs and the various community clubs can do a great deal to help remedy this situation if they see fit so to do.

A statement appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen* of May 17 which I think it would be fitting to read into *Hansard* at this time. It is called: "The \$35 a month home" and has a sub-heading as follows: "Only by subsidies can it be built, say Canadian builders." The article was written by J. L. E. Price, M.E.I.C., chairman of the low-cost housing committee of the Canadian construction association. It reads as follows:

The provision of new living accommodation within the means of families in the lower income brackets is still as much as ever the most involved of all of our post-war reconstruction problems.

It is a problem, says Mr. J. L. E. Price, M.E.I.C., chairman of the low-cost housing committee of the Canadian construction association, that grows more pressing and more difficult day by day as time goes on—more pressing because the demand for low-cost shelter is constantly increasing in step with the growth of population, and more difficult because of constantly increasing labour and material costs.