

point. If you put one man on a combine where you previously used to have twelve to do the work, I would take the other eleven men and put them at some other useful work. There are all kinds of things which the people of this country need and will want in the future. An important consideration is to provide gainful employment for people who are willing and able to work. One of the first duties of this administration is to ensure that there shall be gainful work. We as individuals in this country, if we have the strength and the health, cannot escape our responsibility. The people want the opportunity to work; they do not want something for nothing.

If the present policy of the administration is continued it will perpetuate a situation which for years has been intolerable in the part of the province from which I come. Those of us who come from the west know that a situation prevails there of which the administration cannot be fully seized. At the present time we are practically one hundred per cent agricultural. We have a large surplus of wheat, and probably at the end of this crop year there will be almost a billion bushels of wheat in Canada—far more than we can hope to consume or export for a number of years to come. It is true that we have a ready market for most of the other farm products we can raise. Our beef, pork, butter, cheese, and the like, can be readily marketed; but let me point out to the house that the need for these other agricultural products is not a permanent one. It is only a temporary condition. After the war is over, and pray that it may be soon, all the countries of Europe which produce these farm products will gradually get into full production again and then we shall not have the need for anything like the quantities of beef and pork and eggs and cheese and butter that are required at the present time.

As to wheat, I will grant that for a short time after the war is over a large amount of the wheat we have on hand will possibly be required to feed the starving countries of Europe, but when the great plains of the Ukraine and other parts of Europe are again in full production we shall not be able to consume or export all the wheat that it is possible for us to produce in this country for human consumption. What is in store for us? Those of us who come from the prairie provinces are concerned about the situation. We feel that the administration is not fully seized of it and is not taking sufficient cognizance of the present situation to bring about a better economic situation in that part of the country. Instead of endeavouring to bring work to the men and

[Mr. Bence.]

women in that part of the country, as has been advocated by myself and by many other members from western Canada, the administration is continually draining our population to the point that now we have, according to the last census, fewer people than we had ten years ago. Our province is being literally denuded of its population by the policy of the administration.

Our men and women are being brought to this part of the country and crammed into Ottawa dwellings. Ottawa is a sufficient example, I should think, to any member of this house. I was aghast when I came down this time to find how many more people there were in Ottawa than a year ago. You cannot get into a restaurant in Ottawa today and it is difficult to get accommodation of any kind. Temporary building after temporary building is being erected to house the office workers. Eight temporary buildings have been built already, and another one is being put up at a cost of \$350,000. Why is it necessary to continue to build all these buildings and bring men and women from western Canada to Ottawa and to other congested parts of eastern Canada? It is economically unsound, and so far as an efficient war effort is concerned it is absolute nonsense. In my own local paper for the last number of months advertisements have been printed by different departments of the government in an effort to persuade stenographers and accountants and others to come to work in Ottawa. I will tell you that if those who do decide to come here had any idea of what conditions are like in Ottawa, most of them would not come; in fact I know many who are now endeavouring to get back, but they just cannot find employment out west to go to.

Not only is the government trying to persuade people to leave the west and come to Ottawa through advertisements in the newspapers but the national selective service tell men and women that it is their duty to come down here. They tell men and women in my part of the province that it is their duty to go to eastern Canada and take up war work. It is the duty of the administration, I submit, to see that war work is taken to these people in as large a measure as possible. Not only does the administration tell the people that it is their duty to come here, but it offers them more money than we are able, financially or legally, to pay them.

On the question of congestion and over-concentration, my fear is, and I think it is borne out by the facts, that if we continue this overconcentration and this congestion we shall get far less results per man and woman-