

due to this accretion from the land and from the smaller centres that the great demand for housing has taken place.

I have not the figures before me, but the population of the province of Saskatchewan suffered a substantial reduction, while the population of centres like Vancouver increased at the expense of the rural areas. Greater Montreal now has a population of nearly a million and a half and Toronto must have a population largely in excess of what it was at the beginning of the war.

I am glad that the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) is conducting this bill through the house, because it enables me to ask a person who should know a question which I think anyone interested in a long-range housing program must ask. Since the war, Canada has greatly increased her industrial plants and it is the constructors and the future operators of those plants who are seeking housing today. If the people in those categories were properly sheltered the housing problem of Canada would be solved. Not infrequently the ministers refers to a long-range program.

I think it is relevant in determining a long-range housing program for Canada to know the likelihood of finding markets for this greatly expanded industrial machine. What proportion of Canada's total production depends upon foreign markets? We were told at one time that the United States consumed its total production less about seven per cent. We were also told that Canada had to export nearly forty per cent of her production or encounter unemployment and the trials and tribulations that go with producing goods which can neither be consumed nor sold.

I am assuming that the minister will be able to tell the house what proportion of Canada's production has to be exported to maintain full or nearly full employment in Canada. Where are the markets to be found that warrant, in the first place, the great increase in our industrial plant, and where are the markets to be found that warrant the construction of homes in the great centres of Canada for an industrial population that must depend for its existence upon the finding of those markets which can take from the Canadian producer the fruit of his labours? I hope that the minister, out of the abundance of his knowledge and experience, will answer this question fully.

Canada at the present time seems to be entering into international arrangements which are making it more difficult for Canada to trade. Canada has had in the past—and to them she owes her prosperity in so far as it

was derived from her industrial activities—sheltered markets. I speak of the preference which we enjoyed in many markets as a result of the British preference. That benefit was so considerable that wise men from other countries came to Canada with large amounts of money which they invested in plants in the hope of sharing in the benefits of the Canadian position.

But those times have changed, and Canada has found it necessary to enact laws, applied by the foreign exchange control board, which deny to the foreign investor, who brought his money here to build plants that he might enjoy the benefit of Canada's foreign and sheltered markets, the right to take home that money. This goes to show that the investment is not considered as safe as it was a few years ago.

Moreover, Canada has entered into agreements at Geneva which tend to reduce Canada's tariffs on a number of commodities which are manufactured by her rivals for the markets of the world, and in particular by the United States. Britain, under the form of government which she now has, is not a serious competitor because life in Britain has become costly and prices under her present system of government have gone so high that she is incapable of competing successfully in the markets of the world with many nations.

It seems to me therefore that a long-range housing policy should be directed to finding abodes for people in places in which they can live when markets fail. How can we expect to enjoy foreign trade? Europe is bankrupt, and Canada, in my view, is suffering today from inflation, largely because she is making goods which she is giving to Europe. A great deal may be said of this policy from a humanitarian point of view, but from an economic point of view it is disastrous, because Canada gets no goods in return for those she sends away, with the result that our people cannot find goods to satisfy their longings, and prices of those goods which are available rise constantly. In consequence we have this spiral of rising prices.

Moreover, under the Marshall plan, to which Canada is subscribing, Canada is sending to Europe not only goods that can be consumed but capital goods, the very purpose of which is to set up manufacturing establishments to produce goods in competition with our own. I have no status to discuss housing in all its intricate details. I profess to know very little about the costs of sewer pipe, shingles, cement and other items which go into the construction