

The Address—Mr. Hanna

built by Sherritt-Gordon for the processing of ore being brought from Lynn Lake in northern Manitoba is about ready to commence operation. This plant will produce not only nickel but many valuable by-products, in large quantities. I am sorry I cannot give the house up-to-the-minute statistics on capital investments and output of these various industries. Hon. members will understand that it is already over three weeks since I left my constituency and any figures I have are likely to be badly out-of-date at the present time.

However, some appreciation of Edmonton's growth in the last six years may be gained from the fact that during this time bank clearings have increased threefold to about \$2 billion a year, at the present time. Municipal assessment has increased from \$83 million to \$180 million. Municipal tax levies have increased from \$4.9 million to \$9.6 million. The number of telephones in use has increased from 26,000 to 56,000, with a bigger backlog of unfilled applications at the present time than ever before—a backlog of more than 11,000, to be exact.

I must point out that the constituency of Edmonton-Strathcona is not all urban in character. This constituency includes an agricultural area that can scarcely be equalled anywhere, owing to its deep, rich, black soil and abundant rainfall. Some of the world's finest purebred livestock are found in the rural part of Edmonton-Strathcona; and an indication of its grain-growing potentiality is illustrated by the fact that Thomas F. Rhatigan in this constituency was recently crowned the world oats champion at the royal winter fair at Toronto.

In order that hon. members may learn something more about Canada's fastest growing city, arrangements have been made for the distribution to hon. members of two booklets about Edmonton which, I feel, will be of considerable interest.

In concluding this part of my speech I recall the words of Mr. John Hodgson, recently retired finance commissioner for the city of Edmonton, when he said: It is the only city in the world that one can describe with Hollywood superlatives and still be accused of understatement.

At this point I should like to say that I consider it a great honour to have the privilege of serving my constituents in this House of Commons under the inspiring leadership of our distinguished Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent). Today he ranks as one of the leading statesmen of the world. Canada is fortunate indeed to have such an

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outstanding citizen for its Prime Minister and I rejoice that he is shortly to depart on an extensive tour of Far Eastern countries. No better ambassador of good will could possibly be chosen by Canada, and I am sure that we all wish him a pleasant journey and safe return.

Referring to the speech from the throne, I am most happy, and the people I represent will be happy, at the announcement that the government is considering measures for increasing the availability of money for home building. I hope that when this legislation is brought down it will also provide for a much lower down payment under the National Housing Act than has been the case heretofore.

In spite of the giant strides that have been made in home building in Canada since the war, more and more homes are still needed, particularly in a fast growing constituency like the one I have the honour to represent. I may say that I have had the privilege of serving under the Veterans Land Act administration for seven years, since the war. Under the small holdings provisions of that act the down payment for a home has been only 10 per cent. No one knows better than the government the outstanding success that has attended that particular piece of legislation.

I would also like to commend the government and the Veterans Land Act administration on the success they have achieved with the veterans build-your-own-home campaign. As a result of this scheme many veterans and their families are today far better housed than otherwise they could have been. I realize, of course, that not every person can build his own home, but many can, with a little encouragement. If such a program is fostered it will contribute much to relieving the pressure of the housing shortage right across the country.

I understand that the Canadian Legion has submitted to the government a brief in which they suggest that the build-your-own-home machinery of the Veterans Land Act be made available to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The idea would be for the Veterans Land Act to build the homes within its organization and then turn them over to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation for financing. I believe there is much merit in this proposal and I urge the government to give it most serious consideration.

I also note in the speech from the throne that it is proposed to work out with the provinces a scheme for the establishment of a nation-wide assistance program for the totally disabled. This is, I believe, a very necessary and commendable piece of legislation. It is