

is the best method of assuring in a simple manner a proper foundation of health for the whole nation. It may also be realized that society could save money which is now wasted in trying to teach children who cannot learn from lack of adequate foods.

The right of every expectant mother to proper foods should some day be not only recognized, but actually arranged through pre-natal clinics for everyone.

The influence of nutrition in industry may prove to be so important that no employer would dare neglect, (even if he were able to do so) the value of assistance to his workers in getting an adequate diet.

One thing is clear in this outline of what could and should be done in a reconstruction program aiming to put food in its proper place as an essential of life. That thing is a degree of control which does not exist to-day. The primary producers of agricultural products must be

controlled sufficiently to assure enough of every kind of food that is needed. I have recently calculated these quantities for Canada, and a change in our agriculture is certainly indicated. This control probably means a guaranteed price for these commodities, so as to remove the hazards and stabilize the occupation. Some control of the processing and storage of these foods is necessary so that the public may not be misled into a false sense of security in the foods that are bought. The needs of special population groups like expectant mothers, school children or industrial workers must be met in a manner geared to the aims and needs of the nation.

With such controls, of price, information or whatever is needed in the broad integrated plan for the new order, food will continue to take its place as an essential of life, but could do it in a new manner so as to bring untold blessings to the whole nation.

Homes for the Future

By C. MAJOR WRIGHT

AS in most other countries the present war has also in Canada opened the eyes of the general public to the detrimental effect which unsanitary and blighted housing conditions have on people's working capacity and morale.

Another natural consequence of the war is that since priority has to be given to construction directly furthering the war effort such as ammunition plants and airdromes, the construction of dwelling houses fails to keep pace with the increasing demand. That is to say, when the war is over the housing shortage in Canada, as in all other belligerent countries, will be far greater than it was in September, 1939.

In a study presented in 1939 to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, Dr. A. E. Grauer, Director of the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Toronto, describes the conditions preceding the present war as follows:—"The phenomenal growth of urban population in Canada in the past thirty years would of itself have imposed a severe strain on housing accommodation . . . But on top of this growth came four years of war when the resources of the nation were turned into new channels, a further period of expansion marked by considerable immigration, especially into urban centres, and eight years of severe depression resulting in almost complete cessation of building activity. The inevitable result is a housing problem of unusual magnitude and acuteness."

That the Canadian housing conditions

EDITOR'S NOTE: C. Major Wright, internationally known housing expert is on the staff of the International Labour Office in Montreal. Previously he taught at the University of Toronto. During the summer of 1942 he studied the British Housing Program as a member of a Committee of experts appointed by President Roosevelt.

have not been ameliorated during the present war is evident since the general effect of war controls is to discourage investment in the construction of dwelling houses, the building of large houses, for example, has almost entirely ceased. Licensing was designed to prevent the investment of capital in buildings and is having the desired effect.

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics' recent report on housing in Canada emphasizes the seriousness of a situation long apparent to the public. From seven to twenty-eight per cent of all households in twenty-seven Canadian cities are overcrowded, and not less than 110,000 new dwellings are required to relieve the immediate housing shortage. When it is considered that this shortage of 110,000 dwellings represents more than 10 per cent of the total number of all urban homes, the seriousness of the situation becomes startling.

In addition to this actual housing shortage Canada will, unless drastic steps are taken, also be faced with the danger of bad housing conditions which is always a product of a state of mind typical for expanding industrialisation. The huge discrepancy which already existed before the war between industrial and agricultural wages does not encourage the agricultural workers who have been absorbed in industrial war plants to return to their homes in the country.¹ Consequently the cessation of hostilities will see the housing shortage in the new industrial areas increased rather than diminished. Furthermore the housing shortage will be accentuated by the opening up of new areas. It is likely that the opening of the St. Lawrence Waterway and the Arctic highway to Alaska will provide occupation for a large number of workers in new areas lacking in housing accommodation.

In the autumn of 1492, Mr. George S Mooney told the Real Estate Board's

Convention in Montreal that the re-planning and rehabilitation of Canadian cities was one of the most pressing problems of the post war reconstruction period. Mr. Mooney declared that fullest possible employment and social security would be a basic essential of the post war era, and that urban reconstruction would be one of the greatest potential fields for giving such employment. He further emphasized that progress in this field would have to be systematically planned to make the most of its ability to give employment and to meet pressing needs for urban improvement. The evidence before the Reconstruction and Re-establishment Committee² demonstrates that adequate city and regional planning is absolutely essential as the basis for any efficient housing program. As city planning cannot be enforced overnight, properly prepared town plans should be completely developed and adopted before any post war housing development is finally approved. Especially in the case of the larger cities work on the general town plans should be started immediately and the locality or neighbourhood for which the post war development is proposed, should be so planned as to fit into the general city plan when this is completed.

Although the problem which faces Canadian housing authorities is tremendous both in scope and importance, it is no greater than that facing many other belligerent countries. It might, therefore, be interesting to analyse the blueprints and plans which already exist for post war rehabilitation of English and American cities.

In the middle of bomb-scarred England it is remarkable to find the general attitude that bomb damage is only a short incident in history, whereas blight and slums will be with us for a long time to come. They represent the real problem which has to be faced. A foreign observer visiting the war torn British Isles is immediately impressed by the enormous

1. In his book *The Conditions of Economic Progress*, Colin Clark compares figures representing the rural wage as a percentage of the industrial wage in a number of countries. The Canadian rate is the lowest of the lot: Finland 83, Australia 82, Estonia 79, Latvia 79, France 58, Norway 57, Holland 53, Denmark 53, Germany 52, Switzerland 51, Czechoslovakia 49, Great Britain 48, Poland 32, Sweden 31, and Canada 24.

2. Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-establishment, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, No. 6, House of Commons, Session 1942, Ottawa, 1942.

importance which is attributed to the opinion of the common man, without whose steady energy and willingness to sacrifice England would not have remained the fighting outpost of Europe. Not only is it generally realised that it will be a major responsibility of any future government to house its people in decent and sanitary homes, but it is also recognized that it is important that the new homes correspond to the wishes of their inhabitants. As an illustration of how governmental authorities encourage the public to formulate and pronounce their wishes, it can be mentioned that the Ministry of Health Committee on the Design of Dwellings asked the Standing Joint Committee of Working Women's Organisation as to their views on the planning of their future homes. The members of this as well as those of other organisations showed their interest in the request by responding with great sincerity and a deep sense of responsibility. The result is that many suggestions are continually forthcoming to secure that future homes will be well built, well planned, and well furnished, to make life happy and comfortable for the families who live in them and to make work pleasant and easy for the women who work in them. Many sceptics have been surprised to see that in most cases the wishes were reasonable and the improvements suggested so uniform that they could be realised on a large scale without too heavy costs.

A visit to England is also interesting from the point of view that everybody realises that the problem ahead is so tremendous involving the building of several million houses, without counting the thousands which will need to be reconditioned, that all jealousy between private and public enterprise is entirely unfounded. There are plenty of tasks for them both to perform. The objective of post war economic adjustment and especially of the British post war housing program, however, requires a close co-ordination of private and governmental activities. General agreement, therefore, exists that both public and private invest-

ment should be deliberately controlled so as to establish the greatest possible employment. The tax abatement system for excess profits, the revenue of which is earmarked for post war construction, of factories as well as of workers' dwellings, constitutes an important part of the preparation for post war building. All parties, even the Conservative, expect that a priority system of materials will be applied in the post war period so long as there is not enough labour and material available to build both for the low income groups and for the more well-to-do, that is, no luxury building would be permitted as long as the housing problem of the lower income groups has not been solved. There is unanimous agreement that finance is not decisive and cannot be allowed to become a bottleneck in post war housing. Even English real estate people, who after the last war were anxious to return to the unregulated conditions prevailing before 1914, now realise that control and planning have to be retained. Also, the Government has learnt its lesson in this connection and the Ministry of Works and Planning has been created to plan the building while the Minister in charge of reconstruction will co-ordinate all the plans¹ into one great national plan. The Ministry of Works and Planning has to see to it that the general plans are ready in time, whereas the local authorities can make detailed plans for their own towns. The Uthwatt Report presented by the Ministry of Works and Planning to Parliament in September, 1942, states that planning is intended to be a reality and a permanent feature of the administration of the internal affairs of the country, and that the system of planning assumed is one of mutual planning with a high degree of initiation and control by a Central Planning Authority, which will have national as well as local considerations in mind, and that such control will be based on organized research into the social and economic life of the country and be directed to securing the use and development

1. Such as plans for mining, farming, transport, and industrial production.

of land to the best advantage. The purely individualistic approach to land ownership must be abandoned as the most effective utilization of the limited national resources involves the subordination to the public good of the personal interests and wishes of landowners. The leading aims of general planning should be the removal of undesirable structures, the check on non-conforming uses, the provision of more suitable layouts and the control of redevelopment. With regard to developed land, the report suggests that the planning authority be given power to purchase the whole of war damaged and other reconstruction areas and that once an interest in land has passed into public ownership, it should be disposed of by lease only, and not by way of sale. The Committee recommends that where buildings are substandard or represent non-conforming uses, the planning authority should have the power to fix the life of such buildings for, say, 10 years. For undeveloped land the owners should retain all rights save the right of development, that is, the right to convert agricultural, forestry, pasture, or other vacant land into residential, business or industrial uses. Fair compensation should be provided owners for the loss of title or for confiscation of the rights of development and there should be as little interference as possible with the economic life of the country or with individual enterprise. As increased values may still occur to developed land in private ownership, the Committee recommends the imposition of a periodical levy on the increase in annual site value, with the object of securing such betterment for the community.

In Great Britain special consideration has been given to the problem of counteracting the congestion of the large industrial centres. A policy of industrial decentralisation would allow shorter travelling distances from home to work and consequently shorter gross working hours. Britain has a wide experience in the policy of industrial decentralisation. Before the war large trading estates which made it possible for industries to rent

factory space appear to have been especially successful in accomplishing some decentralisation. The large-scale demobilisation of war plants give particularly good opportunities for large-scale decentralisation of industries, and plans to that effect are in preparation. The evidence before the Barlow Commission demonstrates that labour supply and proximity to the market are of the greatest importance in the localization of light industries. A Board of Trade's Survey of Industrial Development proves, however, that in reality a marginal factor, such as the availability of premises of the right size and shape and with suitable facilities and the possibility of renting rather than buying, is decisive. That is to say, that it is possible to relieve the congestion in the already overcrowded industrial cities by establishing trading estates in new areas. Under the Special Areas Acts of 1934 and 1937, the Commissioners have power to establish trading estates on which factories are grouped or to build and let individual factories anywhere within the areas. There is also power given the Treasury to make loans to site companies in depressed districts outside the special areas. The existing volume of permanent new employment on the trading estates is a very useful contribution to the problems of the special areas, not only numerically but also because of its moral effect. Once light industries have begun to develop on the estates and have demonstrated that location in the special areas has no disadvantage, the way is open for other firms to follow and to begin to develop in other parts of the area. Nuffield Survey investigators in South Wales, West Scotland and the North East agree that the establishment of trading estates has been the greatest single step towards the permanent revival of activity in the special areas. On the whole, there seems to be very general agreement that trading estates were the most effective means employed by public authorities before the war consciously to effect the location of industry. It is natural therefore that great hopes are attached to the beneficial

effects of an extended application of the trading estate system after the war.

During the war essential industries have been concentrated in the most efficient and labour-saving plants and production of necessities has been standardised to a hitherto unknown degree. Most goods available for civilian consumption can thus be obtained only in the form of "utility goods," i.e., a low-cost uniform product which is produced on a large scale. It is probable that the present complete control of industry will be relaxed only on the condition that the Government will continue the production of utility goods. In this way it will be secure that the advantage of technical progress and large-scale production will be fully utilised, providing the consumer with necessities at the cheapest possible price. The concentration of industry has already reached a number of the building material industries, such as the brick industry, and a number of building industries, such as the joinery industry. The shortage of skilled building workers after the war has in Britain been estimated to be especially pronounced in trades required for repair works, such as painters and plasterers. The repairs neglected during the last three years alone will require fulltime work from all available painters for more than two and a half years. Arrangements have therefore already been made not only to train an additional number of skilled workers but also to introduce new building methods such as prefabrication requiring a smaller relative proportion of skilled workers. The Scottish Special Housing Association, owned and operated by the Government, is paving the way for new building methods. However, prefabrication is undoubtedly more in line with the construction methods in the United States than in almost any other country in the world.

According to William Reed, Director of the Standards Division, U. S. National Housing Agency, there are no reasons why a prefabricated house will not last just as long as an ordinary house. Many of the houses now on the market can be

used indefinitely with a minimum of maintenance and repair. There are an infinite number of designs to which prefabrication is adaptable. A variety of two-storied houses are being built by several prefabricators. They claim that their use of precision dimensioning and cutting and their factory control of the fabricating operations make their houses more sturdy than ordinary houses. The buyer has a guarantee of the quality of the house that is as good as the name of the manufacturer. Henry J. Kaiser proposes to initiate a large-scale production of prefabricated houses when the war is over. They will be three-room units and will sell for \$1,500 complete with radio and heater.

The curtailment of the construction of dwelling houses during the war has, in Canada as elsewhere, caused unemployment among bricklayers, stonecutters, plasterers, slaters and tile setters. Consequently fewer young men have entered the trade. When the war is over, many of the trained workers will retire on account of age. There will, therefore, probably be a severe shortage of workers in these trades. Canadian authorities might profit greatly from the new methods of mass production and standardisation now being tried out and developed in the United States. Not only will these methods make it possible to produce low-cost housing on a large scale within acceptable time limits, but they will also help to overcome the shortage of skilled workers.

Another interesting aspect of American housing policy is the extensive use which is made of the Gallup Poll method in order to investigate what people want in respect to housing accommodation.¹

Looking upon the above innovations suggested or carried out in other Anglo-Saxon countries, it might be possible to find a clue to the solution of the enormous housing problem with which Canada will be faced in the post war world.

Control and planning must be retained,

1. Melville C. Branch, Jr., Director of the Bureau of Urban Research, Urban Planning and Public Opinion. Princeton University, Princeton, 1942.

not in order to restrict building, but to secure a healthy and orderly expansion and the procedure for undeveloped land, suggested in the Uthwatt report, can be applied to the new land which the opening of the St. Lawrence Waterway and the Alaskan highway will bring within reach of the industrialised area. The system of Trading Estates may succeed in counteracting the growth of the already too congested cities in establishing new industrialised centres in healthier and happier surroundings making for a clean bill of health and therefore for efficiency. The Gallup Poll method already applied to city planning in the United States and Great Britain, may also succeed in Canada in making city re-organisation both realistic and democratic, basing it on a foundation of public opinion which accepts the purposes of those efforts and approves the general methods of accomplishment.

The task is big enough for public authorities and private enterprise to share the field, the public authorities securing

that healthy standard dwellings are made available for the low income classes, by utilising technical innovations and standardisation to their fullest economic advantage, leaving the demand of the financially better off buyer to private enterprise. Building methods such as prefabrication requiring a smaller proportion of skilled workers should be employed at least until a sufficient number of trained workers are available, and low-cost housing projects should be given priority in regard to available building materials until they, through increased trade and production, can be provided in quantities sufficient to satisfy the existing demands.

If at the end of the war the Canadian people were presented with attractive plans which enabled them to exchange their victory bonds and certificates for a title to a new home, it is not unlikely that Canada would realise Ambassador Winant's prophesy that "the drive for tanks will become a drive for houses."

Health For All

By L. RICHTER

HEALTH means more than absence of illness. It implies physical fitness, mental alertness and creative energy. Good medical services are alone not sufficient to build up a nation's health. Proper nutrition, adequate housing and carefully planned social services, a sound education and reasonable use of leisure time are contributing factors of equal importance. How these aims can be achieved and a decent minimum standard of living secured to the Canadian people is discussed elsewhere in this issue. The present article on Health can therefore be confined to the contribution which medical science through curative and preventive services can make to the country's welfare.

How can we improve the health of the Canadian people? That there is an urgent need for improvement is borne out by the experience of our recruiting offices which had to reject a shockingly high percentage of young men because of their physical unfitness for military service. It is proved by the record of relief agencies which show ill health the most frequent cause of poverty. It is emphasized by the death rate of babies which in the year before the war was 60 per thousand live births, while the rate in New Zealand was 36 and in Australia 38. Nor is there any justification for the glaring differences which in that respect exist between the various parts of the Dominion: twice as many babies died before reaching their first birthday in New Brunswick compared with British Columbia, the ratio

EDITOR'S NOTE: L. Richter is Secretary of the Institute of Public Affairs at Dalhousie University.