

Following the Government's announcement in November, 1947, of stringent measures for the conservation of its dollar resources, all Government Departments have been obliged to report in detail to the Department of Reconstruction and Supply their probable purchases of materials, machinery, or equipment from the United States.

Subsection 2.—Government Aid to Civil Housing*

Canada's supply of adequate housing in 1947 falls far short of actual needs. While this condition undoubtedly existed prior to 1930, it was not widely recognized. With the general depression of economic activity through the period 1929-36, residential construction fell to such a low level that already-existing overcrowding and obsolescence were further aggravated. The high vacancy rate in these years, particularly for apartment dwellings, was a product not of an over-supply of dwellings, but of enforced "doubling-up" of families whose incomes were not sufficient to provide separate living quarters.

The construction industry had not recovered from this slump when in 1939 war production began to drain off materials and labour required for wartime housing construction. During the war years, increased personal income allowed many families to expand into separate or larger dwelling units. These two factors, coupled with unprecedented high marriage rates during the war years and months immediately following, compounded an already critical shortage of living quarters throughout the Dominion.

The tempo of total residential construction, including Government projects, has increased steadily from 1945 to 1947. In 1947, for the first time since 1939, the number of new dwelling units exceeded the net increase in the number of households. Dwelling units constructed numbered about 77,000 as compared with a net increase of 64,000 in the number of families, leaving 13,000 units available to reduce over-crowding.

The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.—To provide co-ordination in the housing field, the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation was incorporated by an Act of the Twentieth Parliament (December, 1945). Briefly, its purpose and functions are: (1) to administer the National Housing Act, 1944, and earlier housing legislation; (2) to provide facilities for the rediscounting of mortgages by lending institutions; and (3) to administer the Emergency Shelter Regulations.

In January, 1947, the Corporation assumed supervision of the activities of Wartime Housing Limited, a Crown Company formed in February, 1941 (see pp. 582-583, 1947 Year Book).

Up to the time of the transfer of the Wartime Housing Limited, to the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation the number of houses completed during the years 1941-47, by the former, was 31,151.

By provinces the numbers were: Nova Scotia 2,336; New Brunswick 1,091; Quebec 4,172; Ontario 14,817; Manitoba 1,722; Saskatchewan 1,455; Alberta 1,439; and British Columbia 4,119.

* Revised under the direction of C. M. Isbister, Chief Economist, Central Research and Development Division, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, by A. B. McMorran, Chief, Housing Statistics.