

was followed by the National Housing Acts of 1938 and 1944, culminating in 1954 with the present National Housing Act, defined as "an Act to promote the construction of new houses, the repair and modernization of existing houses and the improvement of housing and living conditions". Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, a Crown agency incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1945, administers the National Housing Act and coordinates the activities of the Federal Government in housing. The Corporation has the authority and responsibility for a variety of functions affecting housing in its long-term outlook as well as in its immediate requirements. It is empowered to act as an insurer of mortgage loans, as a lender or investor of public funds, as a guarantor and as an owner of property and other assets. It also acts as a research agency in fields associated with housing and enters into partnership with both provincial and municipal governments to assist in housing. (See also p. 119.)

In general, the Government, through the successive Housing Acts, has attempted to stimulate and supplement the market for housing rather than assume direct responsibilities that rightfully belong to other levels of government or that could be borne more effectively by private enterprise. In each case the aim has been to increase the flow of mortgage money and to encourage lenders to make loans on more favourable terms to prospective owners.

The volume of house-building in Canada since 1935 has been spectacular. Close to half of the country's present stock of more than 4,851,000 houses have been built since the first covering legislation was enacted; about one third of these were financed in one way or another under the Housing Acts.

The terms of the National Housing Act, 1954 and its subsequent amendments, with the exception of that passed late in 1962, are described in some detail at pp. 688-691 of the 1962 Year Book. The 1962 amendment (SC 1962-63, c. 17) extends the deadline for partial forgiveness of municipal indebtedness in connection with sewage treatment project loans to Mar. 31, 1965. A consolidation of the Act and its amendments to 1960-61 is available from the Queen's Printer (Catalogue No. YX79-221/23, 35 cents).

Subsection 2.—Housing Activities in 1962

There was a levelling off in the amount of new residential construction undertaken in 1962. The total of 130,095 starts of all types of housing was only slightly above the 1961 total of 125,577, although it represented a substantial gain over the 108,858 reported in 1960. Construction was maintained at a comparatively high level throughout the year, partly because of a large carryover of houses started but not completed in 1961. The value of residential construction work put in place was \$1,587,000,000 compared with \$1,467,000,000 in the previous year.

A shift in the composition of housing starts marked one of the more significant variations in the 1962 housing pattern. There was a considerable gain in rental dwelling starts, rental housing accounting for 41 p.c. of all starts during the year. This trend was not restricted to any one sector. Nearly all metropolitan centres experienced a strong revival in apartment construction. On the other hand, home-owner dwelling starts declined to 77,236 units from 79,477 in 1961.

During 1962, 48,151 units were built with National Housing Act financing, a reduction from the 1961 total of 59,870, and units financed by funds other than NHA numbered 81,938, a considerable increase over the 65,707 units so financed in the previous year. Mortgage money from NHA approved lenders was easily accessible during the first six months of 1962 but during the second half the flow from this source was considerably curtailed. The 32,437 units financed by approved lenders in 1962 represented a 12-p.c. drop from 1961. Meanwhile, conventional mortgage loans were in good supply, increasing from 41,465 in 1961 to 56,365 in 1962.

Demand for new housing in 1962 prevented any large-scale vacancy rate from developing and most of the completed dwellings were absorbed.