

The Budget—Mr. Isabelle

D'Amour, who had just won a splendid victory; and he shook his hands congratulating him for having defeated Miss Whitton, who was then Mayor of Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, a newspaper for intellectuals, *Le Devoir* of Montréal, reporting in 1962 or 1964 a golf tournament at the Rivermead Club, had the following title in its sports columns: "Hull, Ontario".

By all means, Mr. Speaker, I think that we have been systematically forgotten because we are far from Quebec and close to Ottawa. Since we were too far from Quebec, Quebec was forgetting us; since we were too close to Ottawa, Ottawa was snobbing us to some extent, by telling us all the time: Because you belong to a provincial jurisdiction, we cannot do anything whatever in your favour.

Mr. Speaker, 1968 was a turning point in the history of the national capital region. The present federal government, through the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the then Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) decided to remove economic disparities which existed between these two communities which make up the national capital region. And if investments from the federal government had not been announced, we would still be a hamlet in the shadow of the Peace Tower.

These clever people decided to act in order to give us what we had been claiming and which had been due to us for years.

I remember, Mr. Speaker, reading speeches made by Dr. Fontaine, who was the first member of Parliament from Hull, having been elected in 1917, and who spoke exactly to the same point as I am tonight; but instead of saying that there were now things being achieved, he urged that something be done for Hull.

Mr. Speaker, we are now going through a great economic upsurge. The results will be felt around us. We have been experiencing difficulties from all sides. We will experience others, but we are sure that we are on the right path and that the present government will go through history, simply because they wanted to have the national capital represented by its elements, that is Francophones and Anglophones.

Mr. Speaker, I have often said that a country's capital is the seat of its central gouvernement and national institutions. The capital city must reflect the soul of its people, its validity, its strength and its future aspirations. I have said it at all times and if I may say more, its importance is more of a matter of its role than its area or its importance on both the industrial and commercial levels. It is a legislative and administrative center as well as the heart of its national institutions. It is a community without definite boundaries, because every citizen is part of it and all share its activities, responsibilities, problems and aspirations.

• (2100)

Mr. Speaker, I have always been in favour—and maybe because of that my name shall be remembered through history in a way or another—of some sort of a federal district, and I would like to be well understood. Actually, I don't want to talk about a federal district like the one in Washington, for the administrative problems they have

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there are well known. We know that the city authorities of Washington are appointed by the White House. What I would wish, for this economically identical area on both sides of the Ottawa river, is for the people of Hull and area who work in Ottawa not to be penalized.

Mr. Speaker, we are penalized by double public transportation tariffs; we are more penalized in the field of income tax than those who do the same work and live in Ontario.

We are penalized in the field of health, because we live in the Province of Quebec.

The Province of Quebec passes its own legislation concerning tax collection, and I am all for it; but for the National Capital area, one should try to amend the existing laws, so that the Hull people who work in Ottawa, are not penalized, but covered by laws identical to those in effect in Ontario, and likewise that the Ontario residents who work in Hull are not be penalized for the same reason.

Mr. Speaker, it would not be a special status, but a kind of economic arrangement, with the setting up of an identical economic region, in order that the citizens of one side of the river not be classified as first class citizens and those on the other side as second class citizens.

One could quote a good number of cases where people in the area are penalized precisely because they are civil servants.

Very soon, with the new buildings scheduled for Hull, several thousands of federal civil servants from Ottawa and the area will have to go and work in the Hull area. I would like to say here that we are faced with a crucial problem which may seem of little consequence but which is particularly important for those who will have to pay for their transportation. Here again, the Ottawa Regional Community Transit Commission will be penalized. I know that the National Capital Commission is presently trying by all means available to eliminate double fares which we have been paying for 50 years, but I hope this will not be done only to favour the people of Ottawa who will be working in Hull. This anomaly should have been corrected a long time ago. I hope it will become a priority and that this problem will be dealt with without delay.

Federal civil servants living in the area must pay between \$200 and \$1,200 more in income tax per year than their colleagues from Ontario who do exactly the same work. I think that in the national capital area such a thing should not exist and that governments should set up a federal district where laws would be uniform and where all citizens would have the same privileges and would be subject to the same taxes.

Although the separation of Quebec is not yet for tomorrow, an economic separation which I consider serious is slowly taking place. Again recently, car dealers were fighting so that a person from Ontario do not have to pay an 8 per cent sales tax when buying a car in Hull. That is what they tried to do, Mr. Speaker, on two occasions, by tricks that I do not want to qualify tonight. In any event, this situation was settled at the very last minute, because 30 to 35 per cent of customers of car dealers in Hull come from Ottawa.