

Quebec side and the regional municipality on the Ontario side. There is a basic difference, and if the committee can resolve that difference it will have done a signal public service.

We have to look at the studies going on at the present time in the regional municipalities on both sides of the river which are relatively new and relatively untried. On the basis of that, we must decide whether or not we have a duty to go any further at this point to put some other structure in when those are not already tried. We have to canvass the views of the local municipalities; we have to do a comparative analysis of other capital cities; we have to get the views of Canadians who do not live here. I think it important that this be done, because they are paying part of the bill and every person in this country has to accept the concept of a national capital.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): We must rationalize the whole issue of the centralization of the industrial plant of Ottawa, and that is the government buildings. Are we to continue the foolishness of the fifties by centralizing, centralizing, centralizing and putting more and more buildings and more and more people into fewer and fewer acres of ground in the centre of the area? Or are we to consider decentralization? That is basic to our capital. That is basic to the municipalities which lie around us. It is basic to many of the wishes of members of parliament in this area who represent the people of this area. We have to take a long, hard, honest look at the linguistic and cultural realities of this area and not be afraid to face them. We should not be afraid to touch the question, and I do not think we have yet done so.

The National Capital Commission has made some progress in terms of linguistic training in this area but, with respect to the Secretary of State (Mr. Faulkner), he has barely touched the problem in this particular area. How far ought he to go, not only in the national capital but beyond in terms of making this capital a place of symbolic importance to Canadians? I said at one stage, Mr. Speaker, that this area is a microcosm of our confederation. In our national capital we have all the strains and all the divergencies of our country. We ought not to assume that a federal presence means that it follows there must be a direct say in the government of this area by the federal government, any more than there ought to be a direct say in provincial government affairs by the federal government.

Our country has flourished and confederation has flourished despite the differences, and as long as we evidence in this country a willingness and a desire to consult, to co-operate and from time to time to improvise, whether we are talking about Canada or about her capital, our city and our area will continue to flourish. Perhaps that will be the only result of this committee. If it is, we ought not to be disappointed. If a new structure is not developed for the national capital area out of this, we ought not to be disappointed if there is some basis found for reasonable co-operation. We want to make—as I think every member of this House does—the national capital representative of Quebec as well as Ontario, the east as well as the west, the English-speaking as well as the French-speaking, the mul-

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ticultural groups represented in this country as well as others.

I think that if this committee has any function at all, it must do all these things within a framework of protecting the vital interests in the democratic process and the participation in the democratic process of the people who live here, because long after we are finished our tinkering as a committee, whether this year or 25 years from now, people are going to live here and it is important that we create an atmosphere where it will continue to be a good place to work and to raise one's family and to suggest that others do the same.

This will be a very important committee because, perhaps, of the way it zeros in on some of the difficulties of our confederation. I hope this exercise will add to the unification rather than the diversification of our country, and I hope we will not be too disappointed if we approach it with practicality and nothing that is disturbing or shocking comes out of it except a desire to move closer together. I think that would be a great result for the work of this committee.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, we warmly welcome the motion to set up this joint committee. I am particularly pleased to note that although the terms of reference call in particular for a review of the programs and operations of the National Capital Commission, they also call for a review and a report upon all matters bearing on the development of the national capital region.

I join with the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) in suggesting that one of the main purposes of the committee is to try to do a job of reconciliation. There are conflicting points of view and conflicting approaches which need somehow to be brought together, and I believe that if the committee sits down quietly and takes its time it can do a good job in this area. I note that the motion establishing the committee goes out of its way to give the committee authority to sit during adjournment of the House. I suggest this is precisely what the committee ought to do, because it does have a very important problem to consider.

There can be no gainsaying what the NCC has done for this city, and in doing what it has done for Ottawa it has done it for Canada. There was a reference a moment ago to the fact that the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Danson) had forgotten Queen Victoria's part in choosing this city as the capital of Canada. I was not here when she chose it, but I did make my first visit to Ottawa in 1924, and I have been here most of the time since 1942 and I can say to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is a different city today from what it was half a century ago. One of the reasons it is so much more beautiful, so much more attractive, is the work of the NCC. Reference has been made to the green belt, to the parkways, pathways, cycle tracks, skating on the canal in winter, skiing, and so on. There is no doubt that the NCC has done good work for the national capital region and that in doing so it has done a good piece of work for Canada as a whole.