

Estimates

board of examination. Finally, we heard the other day what the terms of reference of this board of examination will be. Without question, the terms of reference, as at present we know them, would not have been handed down a few years ago. The approach of the government, particularly of a majority government, would have been much more dictatorial, if I may use that word, and it would certainly have been within the capacity of the government to ignore public outcry. It could have said, "The decision has been made after proper study and proper hearings under the act." Now, the government has bent to the political winds of the day and I congratulate it. I congratulate it, to a certain extent, on the terms of reference tabled the other day by the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand). I wish the minister had made a statement on motions about those terms of reference. Since then, all we have been able to do is ask questions, bit by bit, and try to elicit information from him as to some interpretation of the terms of reference.

For example, this afternoon I asked the minister if he could inform the House whether the board of examiners would have the power to commission studies into alternative programs, alternative facilities for the provision of air services around Toronto, and he was forced to say, "Well, it is a matter of interpretation; I will take the question under advisement." Fair enough. If he had made a statement on motions the other day, all of us interested in that particular project could have commented then, and the minister would have been able to prepare proper responses. Most observers would have to admit, apart from that and the question as to exactly how the report of the board of examiners is to be made public, that the terms of reference are fairly good in that the board of examiners will look into the need for the airport, into the question of the location of the airport, into the alternatives that can be suggested to take the place of a large international airport at Pickering, into the social and environmental impact of the construction of such airport, and so on. I could go on. In sum, at this particular point of time, the terms of reference appear to be fairly satisfactory.

There are a few other points that must be cleared up. I hope the minister will clear up the matter of the right or capacity of the board of examiners to carry on or commission studies and to spend money for the commissioning of such studies. I understand, from statements the minister made earlier this week in committee, that he does not expect this board to be a passive board, but an active one. It will not be a board that simply waits for people to make depositions before it, but will go out and search for solutions. It is in that spirit that I hope he will interpret the terms of reference, so that there will be a truly active board that will look into these questions.

The other matter relating to Pickering airport has to do with the expropriation of property. It is very easy to be glib about expropriation. It is easy to say on the one hand that everybody in the area wants to be expropriated, or to assert on the other that nobody in the area wants to be expropriated. The fact is that a massive operation of this kind affects hundreds of people who hold different views as to the quality or desirability of the action being taken. Some members of the House, myself included, were satisfied when at the beginning of May the minister undertook in committee to see that no person in the area who did not

wish to be expropriated would be expropriated at this time. He gave this as a solemn undertaking, and since he is an honourable member of this House I certainly accepted it.

● (1730)

Mr. Atkey: The expropriations were completed on April 30. Read the law.

Mr. Harney: Of course. And I have read the law. The whole action with regard to expropriation was taken long before April 30. The confirmation was duly sent out before April 30. But April 30—and this is what is important about that date—was the day by which the government had to make an offer of money, and if an offer of money was not made by April 30 the expropriation would, of course, be null and void. The government did make that offer of money. But the point is this: we have a solemn undertaking on the part of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) that no person in that locality who does not wish to be expropriated will be the subject of any action taken against him, nor will any decision not to go to court or avail himself of any process of law prejudice him in any way until such time as the board of examination has completed its report and the government has disposed of the report in one way or another.

Mr. Atkey: The title has passed. They will have to give the land back.

Mr. Harney: If they have to give the land back, then they have to give the land back. If the government winds up with egg on its face, it is because it has been trying to concoct a rather ungodly omelet. It is their problem, not mine.

Mr. Atkey: Then why do you support them?

Mr. Harney: The hon. member for St. Paul's (Mr. Atkey) calls out: "Why do you support them?" What he means by that question is why did I, as a member of the committee, vote against his motion in committee? That is what he is talking about. Let us find out what he has to say about his own motion in committee. By the way, it was a motion—

Mr. Atkey: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. On a number of occasions the hon. member for Scarborough West (Mr. Harney) has risen to challenge remarks made by me on the ground that they reflected on votes taken in committee. His view was accepted by the Speaker on those occasions, and I would think the same rule would apply to him as would apply to me. I would ask you so to rule.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): The committee has reported, and that is the difference.

Mr. Harney: At the time the hon. member for St. Paul's made most improper statements in this House he was reflecting on a vote taken in committee. All I intend to do now is to read from the record of the committee. I am quoting the hon. member:

I move that vote L30 be reduced in the amount of \$89 million relating to the Toronto International Airport No. 2, less amounts already granted in interim supply by parliament.