

Adjournment Debate

● (1825)

In the past, the federal Government has always followed the advice and recommendation of the City of Toronto Planning Department as far as Harbourfront is concerned. It does not have to do so because this is federal land and under the Constitution the federal Government can override everybody and everything on federal property. However, in consideration of proper planning principles we have always followed the requests and direction of the Planning Department of the City of Toronto. That is the way Harbourfront was developed.

The question is now, when we have two dramatically opposing reports, whether the federal Government will follow our own planning report or the City of Toronto's planning report, which is dramatically different. The people of Toronto want to know and I know the Parliamentary Secretary will reassure them and me tonight.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Lanthier (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, all these questions deal with two different matters: the first one is about a ground lease, and the second one about the progress of a policy review concerning the Harbourfront area in Toronto, or its Old Port area, as we would say in Montreal.

[*English*]

The first question concerns a ground lease which Harbourfront entered into with the development firm of Huang and Danzckay. The question was raised in April, when the lease was signed, and is being raised again by my honourable colleague, the Member for York East (Mr. Redway). Why did the Minister of Public Works (Mr. McInnes) allow the lease to be entered into if a policy review of Harbourfront Corporation's role and mandate was just commencing and a pause in development had been initiated?

The simple answer is as follows: Pursuant to the terms of a purchase and development agreement between the corporation and the developer, all pre-conditions having been met, the next logical step in the agreement was the signing of a ground lease by a date specified in the agreement, April 30, 1987.

Because the corporation would have been legally liable if the lease had not been entered into at that date, and because the signing did not prejudice the outcome of the policy review, the Minister concurred that Harbourfront enter into the lease.

The second question relates to the progress of the policy review. Work on the policy review has continued through the summer and is now close to completion. Those officials responsible for the review have maintained close communication with the city officials, specifically through the Commissioner of Planning and Development.

On August 10, 1987, the city adopted its position on changes it would like to see at Harbourfront, seeking assurances that 40 acres of parkland would be delivered to the City of Toronto. The city's position was based on extensive public input from the Harbourfront Review Committee. The views of the City and the public input have been taken into consideration in the policy review and an announcement will be forthcoming very shortly.

On behalf of the Minister of Public Works, I wish to assure my colleague and the Canadian public that federal commitments on Harbourfront will be met fully very soon.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 3(1).

The House adjourned at 6.29 p.m.