

*National Capital*

acceptance without question of the Fullerton view of local government.

I am not gainsaying in any way the value of his report: it does have validity as a study of the area. However, his recommendations are suspect. I should mention that it suffers from a weakness that he himself admits. At a time when there is a desire among the general public for more responsiveness in government, he is advocating a system of local government for this area which is even less responsive than the opponents of our present system are prepared to suggest about the system we have at this time.

What about this business of efficiency of government: how should we approach it? I suppose one could say, if we want efficiency, let's do away with government altogether in a local area. We ought not to approach efficiency in the industrial sense. Whether or not governments are efficient cannot be measured in the mathematics of the balance-sheet. The efficiency of government, particularly local government, is measured in intangibles—the goodness of the service provided, the needs that are satisfied, the social objects that are attained, and the matter of responsiveness and accountability. It is measured in the ability of the individual to participate in local government; it is based on the decision that the ratepayer makes as to whether, on balance, the government he has, such as it is, reasonably supplies his needs and makes the place where he lives a good place to live, work and raise his family.

There is a danger when we talk about efficiency in government. Governments do not exist for the convenience of the governors or the administrators; they exist for the people they are supposed to serve. That is how we should measure efficiency, whether talking about the national capital or anywhere else but particularly when talking about the national capital. This does not exclude the recognition in this particular area of other elements that ought to enter into any discussion of the nation's principal city in terms of its symbolism and, for that matter, the sense of patriotism and feeling for country that it can engender.

Having said that, I am not suggesting that we ought not examine the governmental structure from time to time. Of course we should. However, we are doing our country a disservice if we advocate radical change for the sake of change. We ought not to throw the baby out with the bathwater; we should examine the baby very carefully.

Using the definition of "efficiency", how are we doing in the national capital area? There is certainly no euphoria about this report. If you examine the national capital area in terms of the approach I have taken to efficiency and the proper definition of that word, I do not think we are doing too badly. The proof of the pudding is perhaps in the difficulty in enticing public servants to leave this area. It is in fact a good place to live, a place where most wants and needs are properly satisfied. Work is available. Some say there is perhaps too much work here, but nonetheless it is here. We have the amenities of recreation and a meeting of the two major cultures of Canada.

The job of the committee must be to examine this report realistically. We must not tilt at windmills or advocate what we know will be unacceptable. Any changes that we advocate must be to make local government more responsive and accountable. Surely we must emphasize the na-

tional capital as a place to live and a place to reflect our nationality. If we approach this question from the point of view of fostering co-operation and compromise, and at the same time make the area a place which visitors from other parts of Canada will leave believing that it was worth the cost, then this government and the committee referred to in the motion will be able to say they have accomplished a worth-while task.

There has always been an upper and a lower Canada. There is, and hopefully there will continue to be, an Ontario and a Quebec. There is, and there is likely to be, an expressed unwillingness to cede territorial rights. There will be the basic linguistic and cultural differences between Ontario and Quebec, at least in our generation and perhaps in the generation to follow. As time goes on, this will be complicated by emphasis on the multicultural aspects of Canada. There will be different approaches in the law, the operation of the courts, the educational system and a host of other things. There are bound to be differences in the national capital such as there were differences in 1867 when this country came together.

The problems that we face in the national capital are really the problems that we face on a daily basis in our country. This does not say that we cannot approach them. As the minister said, we must be conscious of the varying provincial reactions and their points of view. Mr. Fullerton's main theory is that the federal government wants a place at the table. I think I am quoting him when I say that. I do not say they ought not to have a place at the table, but I want no one in this House to think they do not now have a place at the table.

We have to be very careful about how we approach this matter. The NCC, the federal government, is the largest landowner in Ottawa—I think the figure is about 29 per cent—and it is the most strategic land in the city. They have the power of expropriation, the power of the largest purse, and can place government installations wherever they want. They can reflect upon the development of the community and they can deny or grant corridors for infrastructure and the development of communities at will. That is their presence. They have a place at the table right now; the federal government is at the table, with its napkin tucked under its chin, a fork in one hand and a knife in the other.

In all these discussions we ought not to succumb too easily to the theory of a place at the table without examining whether local government ought to have a place at the federal table. That is one of the discussions we will have to enter into very carefully. Perhaps we ought to ask ourselves, why not a representative of the local government in some form or another at the NCC table? The government has steadfastly refused to do that.

● (1530)

One could expand on private theories about the national capital region and be quite romantic about it. But there are certain basic problems that we have to deal with in this area, whether it results in a new structure or whether it results in a continuation and improvement of the existing structure. We have to rationalize, somehow, the differences between the NCC's concept of development for this area and the concept of the regional municipality on the