

● (1630)

[English]

The federal capital district, Mr. Speaker, would cut into the authority of the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario. My colleague, the Hon. Member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. Dick), asked if Quebec would willingly give up Hull, Gatineau, Gatineau Park, and Aylmer and allow them to fall into a new jurisdiction. Would Ontario willingly give up Ottawa, Kanata, and some of the rural areas to a new jurisdiction? I am sure that both Quebec and Ontario would never want to give up jurisdiction over any part of their municipalities. Assuming they would, what tax base would these residents of this new federal district come under? Will the federal Government have to compensate the provincial Government for the infrastructure now in place? Imagine the scenario of attempting to evaluate the present cost of this infrastructure and the debt per capita this new federal district would assume from the provinces and municipalities concerned.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, which law would be applied in a region which is part of two provinces? Ontario's law or Quebec's law? In any event, it would be costly for the taxpayers, not to mention the trouble such a change could spell for the residents who have to adapt themselves to a Federal district.

My hon. friend from Hull-Aylmer mentioned another matter. What education system would be used, Mr. Speaker? We know that each province has its own legislation relating to education. The curriculum and the requisite grades vary tremendously from one province to another.

Also, what language would be used at school, following the creation of such a district? Do you think the people from Quebec would want to adapt themselves to the education system of Ontario? I doubt it, Mr. Speaker, and rightly so, all the more so since Ontarians will not accept Quebec laws.

Would the school commissions in both provinces be consulted or would they have to accept the decision without having a say in the matter?

Mr. Speaker, would the Quebec or Ontario tax legislation apply? As you know, people in Quebec in Ontario do not have the same tax laws. Which one should we keep if the two areas are put together in a national capital district?

Would we consult Queen's Park in Ontario, the National Assembly in Quebec as well as all the people concerned before a decision is made? Or would we impose our decision upon them, as the last government used to do? Just think how much it would cost.

There is also the problem of transport. Presently, each region has its own transit system. We have OC Transpo in Ontario and CTCRO in Quebec. Should we then create a new independent transit system for both areas? In addition, the laws for drivers are different. Would a driving permit cost the same for everybody? Would Ontario residents have to buy

*Constitution Act, 1867*

Quebec automobile insurance in this new district? Many questions come to my mind, Mr. Speaker. Would it be necessary to amend as well the laws regarding automobile insurance?

Let us not forget the sales tax! In Quebec, at the present time, there is no sales tax on some products, including clothes and furniture. Maybe some tax free products in Ontario are taxed in Quebec. Would that change with the new National Capital Commission? The tax rate is not the same either in restaurants in both provinces. This is something else which might have to be changed, Mr. Speaker.

The Quebec Provincial Police as well as the Ontario Provincial Police are two different entities. If we put together Hull and its surroundings and Ottawa in a federal district, does that mean that we will create another police force for that area or are we going to call on the RCMP?

Mr. Speaker, I repeat that in the face of the economic climate in which the Canadian people find themselves presently we cannot consider such changes which all entail very expensive investments. Are we going to create another level of government with the federal district? We are trying to reduce red tape. We have now the following levels of government: the federal government, the provincial governments, the municipalities, the school boards, the regional municipalities, and we are going to add to that a federal district. Imagine. Can we afford to create another level over and above all those we already have? I think, and many of my constituents do too, that we already face too much bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, who is going to benefit from this bill? Are we simply going to make life difficult for the residents of the National Capital area? If they chose to live in the city where they are now, they must have a good reason. What would this change imply for residents on the Quebec side, considering the present gap in housing prices in the two cities? Would it be advantageous or not for them if this bill were passed? In order to support this matter, I would like to quote a paragraph from the November 6th issue of *The Citizen*.

● (1640)

[English]

I should like to quote an article which appeared in *The Citizen* in February 1977. Mr. Claude Morin, Quebec's Minister of Inter-Governmental Affairs said:

—the new Quebec Government would drastically curtail NCC powers on the Quebec side of the river in an attempt to keep the area from being turned into a federal district.

Has there been any consultation since then with the Quebec Government or with the new Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs? Has he consulted recently with the Minister? I do not think so. I think it is just another way of ramming something down the throats of Canadians, without consultation and without any regard for the will of Canadians, and it would be in keeping with the practices of the previous administration.