

We also approve of the decision to establish a commission to survey the whole question of the best use of the Parliament Hill area. I underline the suggestion that this centre block should be the preserve of members of parliament rather than of others. That is why it was built, for parliament. I suggest that in so far as other buildings near by are made part of the Parliament Hill complex, provision should be made for speedy connections. That may well mean a system of underground connections so that those who have to go from one building to another can get there quickly.

On the whole, having just heard the statement this morning, I am happy to say that we are in favour of it. We take this position not only because some of us have the real privilege of spending a great deal of time in this city, but because it is the capital of this country and therefore it belongs to all Canadians. I am delighted that over the years the number of people who have been able to visit Ottawa has greatly increased, and more and more it is true that Canadians recognize this not just as some place off there but as their capital. Anything that is done to make this Parliament Hill area and the whole national capital region a beautiful place, a place where work can be done, and also a place of which all Canadians can be proud, is a step in the right direction. I welcome the statement that was made by the Minister of Public Works, and I trust that action he has outlined will proceed as quickly as possible.

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for sending me a copy of that statement which should have been made to Parliament some 20 years ago, I think, in order to protect the environment of Parliament, because we must acknowledge that the most important structure in Canada, whatever some people may think—

Mr. Baldwin: What about the Bank of Canada?

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): —is the Parliament of Canada, our institution.

The thousands of visitors who come to Ottawa do not come here to see the City Hall, but to visit the Parliament Buildings. For one who comes from my region, the first thing to do is to visit Parliament.

It is quite logical to be told that the government is taking measures to protect the environment of Parliament Hill even if properties must be expropriated, and the Centre Block which we now occupy must be improved and made more attractive.

Mr. Speaker, as does the minister, I deeply regret that some members have to travel from the Confederation Building and the West Block to the Centre Block. It seems to me that the Parliament Buildings could shelter all the members with the greatest comfort, not the one we have known for the two or three days on the sixth floor. It is too warm, in spite of air-conditioning. All members should have an office here. If we have to move someone, let us move the senators to the Confederation Building, leaving the Centre Block to the members—

The Canadian Economy

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Send them to Hull!

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre suggest that they should be sent to Hull. I am a citizen of Hull and I do not want them at all, Mr. Speaker. Let us keep them in Ottawa or put them in the zoo south of Ottawa!

Seriously, Mr. Speaker, the Centre Block definitely constitutes an attraction. Personally, I refused to move to the Confederation Building because I am convinced that Parliament is not the Confederation Building but the Centre Block. And this is why I want to stay here.

I hope that the minister will proceed as soon as possible with improvements so that all hon. members will have their offices in the main building with Your Honour in order that we may legislate for the whole Canadian population.

The minister's statement is certainly welcome and I support it entirely, as do all my colleagues here.

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[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF POLICY ON FOOD PRODUCTION AND SUPPLY—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION

Mr. H. W. Danforth (Kent-Essex): Mr. Speaker, because it is a matter of serious concern to all members of this House and therefore they may be disposed to grant my request, I ask leave of this House to propose a motion under Standing Order 43.

It deals with the confusion and the concern that presently exists, not only over the drastic and continuing rise in food prices, but the increase at an even greater rate of all input costs in food production and distribution to a degree that it now appears to be curtailing production at a time when great supplies are desperately needed.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Carleton-Charlotte (Mr. McCain):

That this House request the ministers of the government either later this day, or on the next sitting day to make full statements on motions with regard to their present policy and future plans to assure adequate food production and supply for Canadians.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member's motion is proposed to the House under the terms of Standing Order 43 and requires unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: There is not unanimous consent and the hon. member's motion cannot be put.