

with a rag, but I come back to the war memorial aspect of this bill, for this reason. I find in the explanatory notes that it is still stated that this is for the development of a national war memorial. I want to ask this question, purely as a matter of construction of bills. Before doing that I want to remind the minister that last September in the speech from the throne it was definitely stated that this planning was for a national war memorial. In fact the minister himself reiterated that last Tuesday, I think it was, and here we have it in the explanatory notes. May I take it from what he said this morning that this bill can be read without carrying this explanatory note. May I take it that what we are now discussing is a matter of government policy, and which is stated to be merely the extension of the activity which the federal district area or commission was set up to engage in and has been actually engaging in these many years.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: Yes. There has been far too much importance attached to the use of words. Some seem to have forgotten that a rose would smell the same whatever you called it. All that parliament is being asked to adopt are the provisions on the left-hand pages of the document which is before the committee. There are some who may regard this as a tribute to the effort of Canada during the war which has speeded up this development; but all that is being asked for are the provisions which are set out to become part of the statute, and the explanations, can be accepted or rejected without in any way affecting the purport of the legislation parliament is asked to enact.

I know that the Prime Minister personally feels that the development as rapidly as possible of the national capital might be such a fitting memorial that there might not have to be other forms of memorials, but it is quite evident that that is not by any means a unanimous view. What is asked for here is something that would and should be asked for even had there been no war at all, and it will have to be done whether or not there are other forms of memorials provided as tributes to the gallant men who served the state in the armed forces during the war.

With respect to the amendment proposed by the hon. member, I would ask him if he would not withdraw it at this time. This is a matter in which a great many people are interested. The name "federal district commission" is the name under which the property is now held. To change it would involve rewriting another bill to carry out the idea which prompts this amendment, and I would ask the hon. member if he would not withdraw it at this time. It

has been placed before the house and the country. I can assure the hon. gentleman that it will be given consideration, but I do not know enough about the affairs of this commission to feel at all comfortable about taking the responsibility of accepting or definitely turning down this suggestion.

This is a long range matter. The name "federal district commission" has been used since 1927, I think. The fact that in the United States there is under the control of the government of that nation a district known as a federal district may have indisposed some toward the aims of this commission. As a matter of fact there is nothing and there never has been, in the statute or in the attitude of the commission, constituting any threat to the local autonomy of the two bodies governing on the two sides of the river here. I think the hon. member will agree with that. There is nothing and never has been anything in the statute or in the attitude of the members of the commission that implied the slightest threat to the autonomy of the municipal corporations, and I do not think there has been at any time anything done by the commission or any member of it that would make the municipal authorities feel their prerogatives were being trespassed upon; and I am sure that is the present mentality of the commission. It may be that it would be desirable to avoid any suggestion of a possible menace resulting from the similarity of this name with that of the United States commission, but I would be much obliged to my hon. friend if he would just allow the matter to stand as something to be considered at another time, and not insist that a decision be made concerning it at this moment.

Mr. BOUCHER: I shall be very pleased to withdraw my motion at the suggestion of the minister, because I believe what he has said is quite correct. But I think this has illustrated the difficulties we have had and those which have been experienced by the federal district commission, and no doubt he has been impressed by the necessity of some change in that regard. I think it would be very improper to press my motion at this time, but I do urge the minister to take into consideration some means to alleviate the fears which do prevail in regard to the creation of a district governed by a commission, instead of an area coordinated by it.

Mr. SHAW: My colleagues and I have had very little to say during this debate, but just in case our silence may be misunderstood I should like to make it quite clear that we approve the bill at present before the com-