

best defence against blighted areas and also provide an avenue of employment during seasonal lay-offs in some industries.

We in the New Democratic Party, Mr. Speaker, feel that these measures would go a long way to solving Canada's housing needs. The building of homes helps in the building of character and a sense of pride and accomplishment which should be experienced and enjoyed by all Canadians.

[Translation]

Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Gatineau): Mr. Speaker, allow me to repeat in this house what has been heard over the last two weeks from all Canadian citizens. The budget tabled a few weeks ago by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) is the best balanced budget we have had for several years. It did not hold any great surprises, but it did contain a most timely one.

That surprise was the practical application of a principle which everyone and especially the leaders admit *in se*, but that no one had thought of putting into practice. That principle is the one that recognizes the small wage-earners, the economically weak, who make up the greater part of our population.

They are the ones who, in fact, must benefit from social and economic programs and who must pay less for those services. Those who can afford it understand that they must pay more, which is normal, to ensure the survival of those social and economic programs essential in any country. That is at least, Mr. Speaker, the opinion of the people I met in the riding of Gatineau. You know that as a result of studies made recently by ARDA in my riding and neighbouring ones, the riding of Gatineau was judged one of the most in need of help among all the ridings in eastern Canada.

On behalf of my constituents, I wish to thank once again the Minister of Finance for remembering them.

Allow me now to talk about a question which concerns more than one department and which will no doubt be the subject, in the years to come, of controversial and bitter discussions, of more or less partisan stands, but which, I am sure, will go its own way just the same; it is the creation of a federal district including part of the province of Ontario and part of the province of Quebec.

Right away I see people pricking up their ears to better hear those strange ideas and pursing their lips with worry, ready to answer such remarks spitefully. However, let us

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keep calm and not say more for the moment except that, in principle, I am as much against the creation of such a district if it were to become a reality tomorrow morning. I know that most of the neighbouring cities and municipalities in the federal capital area to be included in the district do not consider very favourably, at the present time at least, that new geographic entity.

Several municipal councils have said publicly, through their mayors, that they are against the project, using various arguments ranging from a loss of autonomy, political intervention, racial drownings, loss of advantages and personal prestige to a host of others. All that is true but we must realize that one of these days we will have to face a very important problem which already hovers like a menacing cloud over our heads in this area.

I am glad to learn that studies are already under way on the Quebec side in this connection and that the value of such a project in the near future will be fully considered.

The establishment of a federal district, both geographically and politically, is premature at the present time, but the question should be put otherwise. Would we be in favour of setting up a federal district on a psychological level, so to speak?

As a member representing a large part of the city of Hull in Gatineau riding and as a representative of the greater part of the country where are located N.C.C. properties on the Quebec side, I would object to the establishment of such a district immediately. But I would not hesitate to foster this idea right now, while postponing its actual, geographical or political implementation until later, in a more or less distant future.

But inasmuch as:

(1) The Quebec side gets its share of federal buildings;

(2) The development of the huge territory of the national capital on the Quebec side is carried out more promptly and the drive-ways, roads and parks now lying fallow are developed within five years;

(3) An extensive network of schools—an important condition—is built throughout the national capital area, both on the Quebec and on the Ontario side. These would be federal schools restricted to students seeking a career within the civil service. Their schooling standards would be similar and they would be bilingual and bicultural. This would be the