

have sufficient funds on hand to acquire the property fast enough.

I want to commend the government for its plan for a waterfront park in Toronto, but I cannot commend the method by which they announced that scheme during the election. Certainly, there was a lack of consultation, and that is why the motion before the House today refers to consultation with municipalities and provinces. I am not particularly impressed with the suggestion that certain corporations will wind up getting well paid for the facilities and improvements on land that has been worn out long since. I sometimes wonder whether this is not just a form of a campaign contribution or a repayment to these corporations. However, the concept is right. The federal government has already entered into the plan of providing park areas near cities. What we really need is large blocks of land, 1,000 to 15,000 acres, available for kids to ride their trail bikes, or for snowmobiles in the winter time. The town of Mississauga set aside 150 acres for a snowmobile park during the past two years. Isn't that interesting! But that cannot compare with the trails that are around Northern Ontario or Quebec. It does not do much for a person crowded in an apartment house or a subdivision when he tries to use one of these toys, playthings, or recreation units, and there is nowhere to use it.

● (1710)

What we have is a situation where on Friday night the aircraft patrol reports enormous traffic jams, and the Sunday night news reports the carnage on the highway. Instead of using our money to build more four-lane highways to carry people hundreds of miles to cottages and recreational facilities, we might be better off using some of the social capital we have to build a place to get away from it all right in our cities or around our cities. There is nothing wrong with creeks in which to fish near our cities, nothing wrong with camping facilities near our cities, nothing wrong with trees and fields. They do not have to be the most spectacular places in the world. River areas, flat lands, and even land near airports, which the noise factor makes impossible to use for housing, can be used for outdoor activities.

Surely, it is the responsibility of a government that makes land useless for housing or industry to set aside that land for some kind of recreation, and thereby solve some of the problems associated with urban living. The federal government has been accused of not paying any attention to the needs of people in cities. My hon. friend from Burlington always says that the questions asked in this House are about Indians, wheat, oil and fish. It is about time the federal government demonstrated that it cares about the people who live in cities. One of the most viable ways to demonstrate its concern would be to set aside recreational lands around towns and cities, as a visible method of saying to people in urban areas that despite the congestion and growth, here it is possible to live; it is possible to breathe; it is possible to make a city a place that is a worthwhile place to live.

In co-operation with the municipalities, the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs should pay attention to all of the quality of life problems in the city. The Ministry of State for Urban Affairs, through CMHC, talks only about housing. There is a great deal more to the problem of urban

### *Recreation Parks*

living than just housing. The problem of recreation land is but one of the problems, but that problem is encompassed in the word "servicing." It is the responsibility of the government not only to make money available for sewers, and certainly the big pipe is important, but also to attack the total concept of urban life, to make urban life better than it is, to make our cities worthwhile places in which to live. One of the ways to do that is to launch an attack on the shortage of recreation land around cities. I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Scarborough East (Mr. Stackhouse):

That this House affirming that parks created are for people and recreation facilities of people, the government should give immediate consideration to the advisability of (a) negotiating through its committees with provincial and municipal authorities to create large recreation park blocks in and around our burgeoning urban centres (b) setting up an organization or department to acquire park blocks near urban areas as a new national parks policy.

**Mr. Douglas Stewart (Okanagan-Kootenay):** Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to the words of the hon. member for Peel South (Mr. Blenkarn). While agreeing with the purport of his motion, I think, however, it is relevant at this point to reflect on what the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien), who is responsible for Canada's national parks, has done since he first took office less than five years ago.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, he and this administration have established 11 new national parks since 1968, this number being as many as were created in the previous 50 years. It is an enviable record, showing the government's real concern for the continuing need to set aside unspoiled space for public enjoyment. Now, for the first time, every province and both territories of Canada are represented in a chain of 29 unique national parks.

Canada's national parks are indeed special places, and form a spectacular system now stretching from Point Pelee in the south to Baffin Island in the north, and from Terra Nova in the east to Pacific Rim in the west. Canada's national parks now preserve well in excess of 50,000 square miles, which is obviously a tremendous increase from the 10 square miles of Banff national park when it was first established in 1885. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I should also state that our work is by no means done. There is still very much more to do, but we have indeed come a long way.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of representing four national parks, for there are more national parks in my riding than in any other federal constituency in Canada. And I just happen to believe that Okanagan-Kootenays' national parks, namely, Kootenay, Yoho, Glacier and Mount Revelstoke, containing some of the most breathtaking scenery in Canada and North America, are the most beautiful, although admittedly I have met some members of this House who are prepared to quibble over this fact.

I think it is worthwhile to recite the continuing policy of the government which is predicated upon section 4 of the National Parks Act which states:

The parks are dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment... and such parks shall be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.