

### Recreation Parks

the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles)—Pensions—request for removal of ceiling on escalation of pensions of retired public servants, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and armed forces personnel; the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie)—Social security—suggested increase in family allowances and government contribution under Canada Assistance Plan because of welfare situation; the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Rowland)—Energy—capability of Energy Board to judge application to transport natural gas in other than vapour form.

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely notices of motions, public bills.

● (1700)

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

[English]

### NATIONAL PARKS

#### SUGGESTED NEW POLICY TO NEGOTIATE WITH PROVINCES AND MUNICIPALITIES TO ESTABLISH RECREATION PARKS

**Mr. Don Blenkarn (Peel South) moved:**

That this House affirming that parks created are for people and for 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.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it has become trite to say that by the year 2000 some 90 per cent of our citizens will live in cities with a population of some 100,000. We may not appreciate that, but I suggest to the House and to you, Sir, that there is clearly no way to stop this tide. The government must take off its blinkers and recognize that we will have a problem and we must plan for that eventuality.

I moved to my municipality in 1948. At that time it was a rural municipality with a population of about 6,000 to 8,000 people. The census in my municipality indicated in 1971 a population of 178,000 people there. At the time of the election there were well over 200,000 people, and by the time the next census takes place my municipality will number well over 350,000 people. That is an indication of the burgeoning urban growth which is taking place around our major centres. The people in our society do not want to create ghettos in cities. They do not want our cities to become like New York or New Jersey. We do not want to live in a Chicago, a Tokyo or a Liverpool. We want cities that are open, cities where there is a place to breathe and a place to play.

I was fortunate to be brought up in the west end of Toronto. Many years ago the Howard family donated a large park in Toronto called High Park, and when I was a boy parts of that park were undeveloped and open; one could do things there. Things have changed since then.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

The park is now surrounded by high rises. What we had and what does not exist any more is large park belts or large park blocks around our cities. It would be nice if our cities had benefactors such as Howard who could come forward and donate these large park areas. However, that does not seem to be the case in the rush and push of our society today. We cannot depend on the good nature of people. Perhaps such park areas could be created through taxation and other charges on our urban society, but what we must do is to make it possible for people in our large cities to have a place in which to breathe.

Our present national parks policy has as its aim the preservation of what is grand and spectacular in Canada. I suggest to you that what we really need for our urban society is a policy of serving rather than preserving. I spoke about this during the last election campaign. In many cases people are quite pleased with our national parks policy in terms of preserving the beauty and the grandeur, but really it is not much of a policy when you take Crown land from one jurisdiction and put it in another. This does not do anything. The park on Baffin Island is pretty interesting. It is a great place for the wealthy who have an aeroplane to enable them to go out and look at the walruses, but it does not do anything for the people. It is a reservation, not a park. Even the Banff National Park, which is visited by more Canadians than almost any other park in Canada is a once in a lifetime experience. Most Canadians will never see it, and some will only see it once. What we need is facilities close to where people live so that Canadians can enjoy the open air.

Sometime ago, in 1954, there was a tragic hurricane in the greater Toronto area called Hurricane Hazel which caused death and destruction in southern Ontario. But it is a foul wind that does not have some good in it, and as a result of that hurricane there developed the Metropolitan Toronto Conservation Authority, conservation parks on the Humber and Don rivers, and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority. These conservation authorities have done a wonderful job, but they have been limited by the amount of money available.

The escalating growth in urban centres is such that it has exceeded the financial capacity of both the province of Ontario and the Ontario municipalities. I am sure I speak of other large urban areas in Canada as well. The Heart Lake conservation area in the county of Peel has a lake which is very nice, but try to get to it after ten o'clock in the morning on a weekend in the summer. You will find it closed because too many people are trying to enter. That is the case with almost every recreation area in every park and every bit of ground around the greater Toronto area. I am sure that the developers are required to supply 5 per cent to 10 per cent of their land for park purposes, but that is not enough. We need vast blocks of recreation land around where we live. That land does not have to have dramatic or spectacular scenery. We need space for our children to play on. I was very pleased during the past week to note that the province of Ontario had produced a plan for a green belt around Toronto. When I looked at the financial requirements for obtaining that land I noted that, even though that land was shown as a green belt in the plan, there is certainly no likelihood the province will