

Adjournment Debate

When I visited the two airport locations I had the impression that many aspects of the situation were the same. Yet there is a big difference in the way the expropriated owners are treated in the two airport locations. The enormous difference means that in Pickering speculation will benefit the expropriated while in Sainte-Scholastique, it will benefit no one. It will only succeed in making the expropriated lose large sums of money, because the difference of amounts paid for identical values is atrocious.

The manner in which the expropriation was done varies greatly between one place and the other. Here are two reasons why: first, the new expropriation act presented a few months after the Sainte-Scholastique expropriation and a letter from the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) which assured the expropriated that they would be treated according to the spirit of the legislation; second, the determination of the people in Pickering not to give away their possessions or almost, and how I understand them!

I found out, Mr. Speaker, that expropriation causes less prejudice of all kinds to the farmers of Pickering than to those of Sainte-Scholastique, as far as the value of farms is concerned.

The farmers expropriated at Sainte-Scholastique face many problems which would be too long to list here, but I thought it advisable to inform the House. The loss in value is not taken into account, and those losses are even more detrimental because in Sainte-Scholastique, there are only 88,000 acres to disrupt.

Who knows what tremendous moral pressures and tensions every expropriated farmer was subjected to during the protracted negotiations which, in some cases, have been going on for 4 years.

I ask now, Mr. Speaker, that a special committee be set up in order to put an end to these blatant disparities between the treatment given to the farmers expropriated at Sainte-Scholastique and at Pickering and that justice be done in all cases, so that the former owners who must make room for international airports or for the expansion of international airports will be glad to move, because I think that those airports are necessary.

[*English*]

Mr. Joseph-Philippe Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, land at Mirabel was expropriated in March, 1969, whereas the Pickering expropriation took place in January 1973 under a new expropriation act which became law in July, 1970. Notwithstanding this, in the main the same basic principles for compensation were followed in both expropriations because the new act merely modified the rules for compensation allowed under the old act. In the final analysis market value is the basis for compensation under both acts.

We have stated repeatedly that it is not realistic to compare market values in one area of the country with those in another, particularly at different times and under different conditions. Market values in both cases were established by expert appraisers through the examination and analysis of comparative sales in the open real estate market to establish prices that willing buyers were paying

[Mr. Beaudoin.]

for comparable properties. This then became the compensation base, and it is inconceivable that government agents would resort to intimidation and threats to force owners to accept an amount below fair value. The history of federal expropriations indicate the reverse is true.

Whether or not the Mirabel owners have been treated as generously as those at Pickering is a matter of judgment. Although government administrators attempted, to the best of their ability, to observe the principles of the impending new expropriation act, the very size of the project, coupled with severe operational time limitations, made it difficult at times to interpret the rules of an act which was still in the drafting stage at the time. While the same principles of compensation have been followed in both expropriations, confusion has quite naturally bred discontent and has led to charges of discrimination.

The record shows that all but 28 owner residents at Mirabel paid no rent of any kind for about 21 months, over 1,500 did not pay rent for almost three years, and at least 100 are still not paying rent. Nevertheless, the residents of Pickering were given rent-free occupation for 23 months, and in addition all had the opportunity to receive the full compensation three months after the expropriation, a benefit which could not be afforded the people in Mirabel under the old act.

Due to the confusion I have referred to, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) and the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Dubé) have arranged to meet, in November, with representatives of the people at Mirabel to discuss problems. Of course, I am not in a position tonight to prejudge or to announce what the results of that meeting may be.

AGRICULTURE—BRUCELLOSIS—RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTROL AND COMPENSATION—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Elias Nesdoly (Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, on July 13 of this year I asked the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) several questions regarding brucellosis, a disease that is currently plaguing northwestern Saskatchewan. It seems to be concentrated mainly in that part of the country. One of the questions I put to the minister was this. I asked whether he had considered a brief presented to him by a group of farmers in northwestern Saskatchewan, and whether he was yet prepared to implement some of the recommendations contained in it. The answers given by the minister were evasive. His only contribution was to define the word "brucellosis" as "contagious abortion." Second, I asked the minister whether he was prepared to begin adopting a humanitarian approach to farmers who suffer losses when their herds are infected by brucellosis and when he intended to make the necessary decisions to help bring this disease under control. He had no answer to that question.

My main concern now is the necessity for a humanitarian approach to the situation of farmers whose herds of cattle are affected by the disease. In August, after the parliamentary recess had begun, many farmers were up in arms over the handling of this matter and this culminated in a demonstration at Debden, Saskatchewan, during which the federal government attempted to use strongarm methods, including the calling in of the RCMP. Demon-