

The Address—Mr. Basford

native to what we have now, under which, simply, cities sprawl ever bigger and, in many instances, our best agricultural land surrounding those cities is paved over. New communities taking the pressure off the old are one way in which the federal government, in co-operation with provinces and local governments, can bring some shape and direction to the inevitable and rapid growth of urban living in Canada.

More than just the relieving of pressure on existing cities and neighbouring farm lands is involved, important though those considerations are. New or expanded existing communities, chosen within provincial planning strategies, can be a means of economic buildup for regions. They can be developed within a metropolitan region or on a resource frontier, to give two popular examples. The federal government is prepared, by amendments to be introduced to the National Housing Act and by involvement in federal-provincial conferences, to take the lead in creating some viable alternatives to the uncontrolled and unplanned expansion of our great cities. Some existing provisions of the National Housing Act and some new provisions which are contemplated can be of great assistance to provinces and municipalities in planning and developing new communities which will meet the anticipated needs of our growing urban populations.

• (1430)

This assistance can be made available for the acquisition and planning of the land which may be needed for many purposes related to the creation of new communities. For example, on the subject of new communities, I might take this opportunity to inform the House that the Ontario Housing Corporation, on behalf of the federal government and the Ontario government, is optioning some 5,000 acres near Ottawa for a new community. This land, the acquisition of which is to be announced this afternoon, has been designated a potential new growth area by the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. The action of the senior government in acquiring the land is to complement the far-seeing initiative of the local governments concerned. The new community ultimately will have a population of 100,000 people.

Mr. Baker: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the minister would accept a question now or prefer that I wait until the end of his speech.

Mr. Basford: I am quite happy to answer a question now.

Mr. Baker: A few moments ago the minister mentioned the announcement of a super-city outside Ottawa. Could he tell us whether or not he has had any consultation with the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton with respect to its location, and whether or not he has had any consultation with the township in which it is to be located concerning its location.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. I must bring to the attention of the hon. member that the point he is raising is not a point of order, a point which concerns the rules and the operation of this House, but is merely a question he wishes to ask of the minister. If the minister should reply to the question, it would take away from the time allotted to him. It would be very difficult at this time

[Mr. Basford.]

to allow the question to be answered because we have reached the point where the time allotted to the minister has expired. Unless hon. members of the House would agree that the minister be allowed to go beyond his allotted time, I could not allow the question. It is agreed that the minister be allowed to reply to the question and complete his remarks?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Bell: Apart from the fact that ministers have been receiving an extra five or 10 minutes in order to finish very important speeches, we do have a tight schedule to follow.

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that point. First of all, if the House is giving its consent that I continue, may I say I thank them. I appreciate the comments of the whip of the opposition party and will be very brief indeed. In reply to the question asked by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), there has been a long series of negotiations and discussions with the chairman of the regional district and, of course, the plan is in accordance with a planning study commissioned by the regional district, by the Ontario Housing Corporation and by the two agencies of the federal government, the National Capital Commission and the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, if the minister would permit a question, I should like to ask him if it will take as long to develop the new city outside Ottawa as it has taken to develop the Malvern development outside Toronto which started in 1951.

Mr. Basford: I would hope not. I think the Malvern development has shown what has been wrong in respect of land assembly in the past. I believe its operation is serving a useful purpose. One of the things I will be discussing with the provinces in particular is how better to manage provincial land assembly schemes in order to ensure they are placed on the market when needed and have a desirable effect on prices. What I am talking about now is total planning in terms of a growth plan for the region, which is a regional and provincial plan. This is very important for future growth.

In conclusion, and bearing in mind the statement of my friend in the opposition, may I say that in proposing amendments to the National Housing Act there were in the changes introduced in Bill C-213 a number of programs including assisted home ownership, repair and rehabilitation of neighbourhoods and support by the federal government of loans and grants to non-profit organizations, both municipal and private. The provisions required a matching provincial grant in all the three programs and it would be my proposal to delete the requirement for cost sharing in those programs in order to make federal grants available regardless of the extent of provincial and municipal contributions. In all those areas, there is always provincial and municipal support. It only adds to the red tape if they are required to be matching. I shall be discussing that kind of proposal with the provinces. We will also be considering with the provinces funding arrangements which would assist them in extending their forward planning beyond a one-year time frame. This