

*National Capital Act*

pray they will be more successful than the people who appeared in front of the National Capital Commission when the large part of the expropriation was being done in 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1961.

**Mr. J.-T. Richard (Ottawa East):** I rise at this time to say only a few words about Bill No. C-12, an act to amend the National Capital Act. I might say that I would have preferred to have an opportunity to talk about our national capital plan in general. As the hon. member for Carleton (Mr. Bell) said a few moments ago, we should discuss some crash program to do some of the work which should be done between now and July 1 next year.

However, this bill relates particularly to the green belt. As the hon. member for Carleton and the hon. member for Russell (Mr. Tardif) have indicated, there is a provision in the National Capital Act which enables the commission to appoint such committees as it considers necessary or desirable for the administration of the act. No doubt one can assume that if the commission felt it necessary, they would have such a commission established for the green belt. I am surprised, I must say, that the commission has waited this long to appoint what is termed an agricultural advisory committee and which, I assume, would do in part the work this green belt committee would do. I am sure this action must have been taken because of this bill which the hon. member put on the order paper.

My only objection at this time, and it is not an objection to the bill, is that these committees, like this green belt committee, do not have any power. I go back to my perennial statement on this subject of the national capital. We have never properly delimited our plans for our capital. We talk about a national capital, but nobody seems to know who has any power to do anything about it. I feel this is the first thing that should be done, once and for all, namely that the two authorities should settle this problem immediately. I refer to the federal government and the provincial government. They should act in co-operation with the municipalities concerned. There are always these plans being made which involve provincial agencies, but provincial representatives never take part in the planning. It is the province that has the power over the land as well as over the municipalities.

We had a very good illustration of this only a few days ago in court here in Ottawa on an expropriation case. The appellant in this case before the Supreme Court of Canada was claiming his lands had been wrongly expropriated by the National Capital Commission which, he alleged, did not have the power of expropriation. The Solicitor General of Canada (Mr. Pennell) claimed that Canada could even expropriate provincial lands. The only objector to this theory was some interloper from Quebec, who was not really interested because these lands were in Ontario. There was no one from Toronto present, so we do not know the viewpoint of the province of Ontario on this subject. The matter is left somewhat hazy. We do not know at this time, as I say, what are the thoughts of the government at Toronto toward this national capital plan.

I am in favour, Mr. Speaker, of this type of committee, but I should like to have the National Capital Commission come forward with the kind of plan required and be given the power to do the things it is doing. The things it is doing are not wrong, but everyone is suspicious of them because they are not set out in black and white. Everyone is afraid to have them approved by proper negotiation or through a proper decision of the court.

• (5:40 p.m.)

I do not think that this matter should go to the courts. I think that the province of Ontario, together with the government of Canada, should once and for all sit down and decide whether they want a national capital of a certain kind and a National Capital Commission with certain powers.

I am a native of the city of Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, and we natives are all very proud. Like all citizens of Canada, we are anxious to co-operate. But let no one think that it has been an easy thing for those who are taxpayers in this area to co-operate in a plan which is so hard to put through; when we are subjected to increased taxation because we are partners in a plan which entails considerable expense. Nevertheless we are willing to go ahead if we know where we are going; and if this kind of committee can help, I for one am all for it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Gatineau):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate my colleague for Carleton (Mr. Bell) on