

May I be allowed, Mr. Speaker, to draw a parallel just as obvious when I suggest that the people in the eastern part of Ottawa, Vanier in particular, suffered the same fate with respect to the active presence of the federal government or the National Capital Commission. A great many people are French-speaking and I will spare you, Mr. Speaker, the story of the hard struggles which the French-speaking people of Ontario had to carry on to avoid assimilation to assert their rights to use their mother tongue, to have their children educated in their schools and God knows how patient and persistent they were.

Much still remains to be done in communications and legal recognition, to say nothing of the basic right to obtain services and defend oneself in court in the mother language.

Without prejudicing the recommendations of the committee which will soon be sitting, I would like however to remind hon. members and the committee that the French-speaking minority in the national capital, over 100,000, making common cause with their French-speaking brothers and sisters of Ontario, would never accept new structures which would legally or otherwise separate them from the rest of the Ontario community.

I do not think that the government should choose the way of confrontation and impose the creation of a federal district over which they would have supreme control. As a matter of fact, this committee will have to pay attention to those who will express the wish to be heard, and as the hon. member for Gatineau (Mr. Clermont) said, I invite all the socio-economic groups and others to bring forward to the committee serious and well documented reports.

The Committee will not have to give the impression to exist in order to defend the Fullerton report or to make on the account of the NCC a kind of popular consultation that this commission sometimes forgets to make. This procedure would be undemocratic and it would not take into account the validity of the reserves made until now by different groups.

It is therefore inspired by the necessity to respect the legitimate opinions of all concerned that the committee will have to find an effective and fair method to administer the national capital. According to the motion before us today, Mr. Speaker, the term of reference of the committee will include the review of the programs and operations of the National Capital Commission. The committee will have therefore to cast a critical glance over the internal organization and achievements of the National Capital Commission since 1958.

It might be useful to consider the possible integration in a much more concrete way of the National Capital Commission into the federal civil service. Such an integration of the National Capital Commission into the federal civil service would have as a significant consequence the fact that the appointment and promotion of its employees would be subject to the same terms and conditions as all other civil servants.

By way of a conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I emphasize once again to the House how important I feel is the development of the City of Vanier. As a small community with a population of 21,000, it is entitled to a larger federal presence.

### *National Capital*

Vanier is now faced with the challenge to eliminate inequalities and even chances of development; to achieve its purpose, Mr. Speaker, it is entitled to a federal presence which will allow it to assume the role it deserves within the national capital. The people in Vanier may be poorer and sometimes more heavily taxed, but they are intent on living and proud to belong as full citizens to the national capital region. As such, they want to participate in the progressing development of our fine national capital.

● (1700)

[*English*]

**Mr. Hugh Poulin (Ottawa Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may my first words in this debate be of congratulation to the minister, who I think is taking charge of a most difficult portfolio, that of Minister of State for Urban Affairs, at a time of decline in housing starts and increasing unemployment in this country. From my discussions with municipal officials in various areas I can tell him that he has their confidence and that they are willing to co-operate with him in every way in the achievement of a most exemplary national capital area.

In the course of his opening remarks, the minister mentioned that we have a magnificent site here. Indeed, I think geographically speaking the good Lord has placed us on probably one of the most outstanding sites for a national capital in the world, certainly of any that I have seen. I saw some national capitals of the world recently as a member of the parliamentary advisory commission on accommodation. As a member of that commission, comprised of members of this House and of the Senate both present and former, we visited national capitals on two continents and I do not think we saw a site more suited to a national capital or more suited to expansion and beautification of a national capital area than the site we have here. I think all of us who visited these national capitals and benefited from seeing what goes on and the progress they have made in expanding their national capitals, many of which go back centuries before ours, would generally agree with that statement.

I would assure the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) that the members of this parliamentary commission would be very anxious to meet with the members of the committee now being set up in order to ensure that there is co-ordination of effort. While the former commission was set up to define the accommodation needs of members of parliament, this new committee is being set up to review and to report upon matters bearing upon the national capital area. I should like to make some general comments and discuss three specific areas respecting the national capital area. The first is the NCC and planning; the second is the NCC and bilingualism; the third is the NCC and decentralization within the national capital area.

Today's national capital region, a product of Canadian federalism, mirrors many of the familiar political, social, linguistic and cultural differences of Canadian society. It is something distinctively and recognizably Canadian. The region comprises the various jurisdictional strata which make up Canada. There is the federal presence, of course, and the provincial, regional and municipal authorities—that is, two provinces, two regional governments and more