

while that in Pickering took place in 1973 under the new legislation. Nevertheless, in both laws, the new one as well as the previous one, the sale value of expropriated property is used as the main compensation base and that takes into account the special value as well as the harm resulting from expropriations in the case of the owners. Both laws are based on the same principle of equity and justice, whether the expropriated people are from Pickering or from Mirabel.

The difference between the new 1973 legislation and the previous one, which goes a long way back, is in that the new law provides for a more flexible advisory mechanism, a more complicated and longer process as to the stages of the expropriations as a whole.

Now, even without any legal obligations, since expropriation in Mirabel have taken place under the former legislation, this government wanted to take present requirements into account. We decided that all Mirabel residents should benefit on a retroactive basis under the new legislation provisions like those who are expropriated from Pickering.

With this in mind, Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) and myself went to Mirabel and announced that an additional compensation of about \$16 million would be paid to those who had been paid as well as to people who had not been paid yet. Here are these five benefits: first of all, \$3,000 to be paid to every homeowner-resident on the date of expropriation, second, every homeowner will get a 5 per cent interest with arrears to July 1, 1969, and 6 per cent from that date up to 1970. In addition, expropriated people in both Mirabel and Pickering will be exempt from paying rent during a period of 23 months. As well, every homeowner-occupant in Mirabel on the date of expropriation will get a reimbursement allowance for the usual notarial fees that he had incurred for the purchase of a new house to replace the house that was expropriated. Fourth, in Mirabel, every homeowner who would have lost the advantage of a preferential interest rate will receive an equal compensation, provided his claim is justified. Fifth, every homeowner in Mirabel who had to leave within fewer than 90 days' notice will receive an additional compensation of 10 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, even after the government has announced all these advantages, which I believe are very generous and offered under no obligation, another unjustified charge was made that the government had not followed any criterion to proceed with the basis assessment of homeowners in Mirabel.

On the contrary, as soon as the expropriation process began, the government had called upon three of the largest assessment firms of the province of Quebec, that are both independent and specialized in this area, thus providing two major guarantees of competence and equity, both for the expropriated people and for the government.

I can assure the House that the work of these assessors was certainly not easy, especially since it involved a rural area where the real estate market was not very active.

Under these circumstances, the assessors, after a detailed study, decided that the most adequate and equitable assessment method would be that based on the physi-

The Address—Mr. Dubé

cal value, which reflects the real value and involves the following calculations: (1) the value of the piece of land itself, established after consultation with agronomists with good knowledge of the area; (2) the depreciated replacement cost of the buildings; (3) as concerns the improvements made to the properties, they were all included and assessed on the basis of current prices; and (4) the compensation for damages included the removal expenses, the loss on machinery and stock, the costs incurred for conditioning specialized cultures, notarial fees, etc.

It is not a secret that in cases of expropriation, compensations are somewhat more generous than required in order to reduce the risk of injustices and errors, which are always possible in evaluations and other operations involving the human factor. We thought it better to err by giving too much rather than the opposite.

Mr. Speaker, we are very pleased by the fact that 89 per cent of the Mirabel claims have already been settled. Of a grand total of 3,126 cases, only 349 remain to be settled. To hasten the settling of the 349 remaining cases, we have accepted the request made by the three members of this area, the members for Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes (Mr. Fox), Labelle (Mr. Dupras) and Terrebonne (Mr. Comtois), and by the CIAC committee, a local committee, to establish a conciliation board formed of three men highly esteemed and very qualified residents of the area, Messrs. Lacharité, Faguy and Noël, all readily acceptable by the expropriated people and the government.

The first case analyzed by this board was settled in a few hours. With the express request of the CIAC, the board has begun the examination of a second case which took a long time, because the parties, especially the members of the CIAC, wanted to turn it into a typical case or, I should rather say a famous cause.

I must admit the three members of the conciliation board have displayed outstanding patience, hearing a great many witnesses, reports, experts and neighbours. Day after day, the CIAC members practically lived in the hearings room and analysed the matter from all angles and then some.

It is therefore at least surprising that in mid-February the CIAC members decided to deliver an ultimatum thus trying to get the conciliation board to publish a report immediately. Those same people who had brought forward so much evidence are now ordering the immediate release of a report.

As for ourselves, we are serenely awaiting the board's report. It will be our duty to correct any injustice to which it will give rise.

On the other hand, if the CIAC members keep on obstructing and prolonging the hearing of each case, we shall have to remind the expropriated that other avenues are open to them and could lead to solutions.

In other words, if the CIAC members delay the hearings unnecessarily, by producing numerous witnesses or through other even less democratic methods of obstruction we shall then advise the well-disposed expropriated either to negotiate directly with us or to bring their case to court, as they have the right to do.