

*National Capital Act*

in order for it to function, then there is no need for this bill.

However, Mr. Speaker, although I am going to vote in favour of the bill—and I am going to tell the hon. member why I am going to vote in favour of it—I want to tell him that I feel this bill may make an unnecessary change in the act as it now stands. My hon. friend has said he has the highest respect for every member of the commission, with the exception of one black sheep who belongs to that large family which administers the national capital. I do not know to whom he is referring. However, if there is only one in this flock, then I think that is a rather good average. It would be better if we did not have any, but I do not know whether that is possible.

The hon. member wants an additional committee of from five to 12 members. He has said there is a great deal of confusion about the national capital and, because of this confusion, because of the lack of experienced people, because these people do not know the problems of the green belt, we should have a committee of from five to 12 people. He must realize, as we all do, that the more committees you have and the larger those committees are, the less work is done.

What surprises me is that when the hon. member was a minister he did not make the recommendation to set up this committee. He said he was not successful when he suggested the establishment of this committee to the present government. However, he does not speak of his lack of success when he was sitting on the treasury benches. I do not know why he did not mention it. Most of the members of the National Capital Commission were appointed by his government, and they were appointed on his recommendation. As a matter of fact, most of them are still members of the commission. I do not suggest this is the reason they are not capable of looking after the problems of the green belt, and I am sure that is not what the hon. member meant, either.

I shall vote for this bill in any event, but I am a little afraid that if it passes it might add to the confusion that already exists by reason of the number of committees we have today. Actually, if the purpose of the measure is to protect the people in the green belt who are going to be expropriated, then the hon. member is closing the barn door after the horse has been stolen.

[Mr. Tardif.]

In so far as the Ontario side is concerned, most of the expropriation has already taken place. There are no expropriations that have to be made on the Quebec side, through negotiation. If the purpose is to protect people who are going to be expropriated, there are very few of them left. When I was in opposition, many of these people came to me as well as to the former member for Carleton requesting representations to enable them to get a square deal. In many cases they did not get a fair deal. I am sure that the present staff of the National Capital Commission can gather the data to make sure that the lands for the green belt are the best plans for the city of Ottawa. In the first place, they have at their disposal a great number of experts who can provide information to the National Capital Commission. They do not have to be members of a committee. I am sure the members of the National Capital Commission staff will accept the additional burden, will probably be willing to sacrifice some of their time, to do the kind of job we expect them to do.

So far as I know there are only a few parcels of land that remain to be expropriated under the present plans of the National Capital Commission for the development of the green belt. This afternoon the hon. member has referred to the fact the commission has plans for recreational areas, small factories and many other things that are going to be located in the green belt eventually. If these plans already exist, and if we need advisers to change those plans somewhat, I am sure we can do that without having a committee.

However, I am going to vote for the bill if it comes to a vote. I am going to vote for it for this reason: Even if there are only a few people to be expropriated, or if there are people who have been expropriated who are dissatisfied with the treatment they received from the people who valued their property when it was expropriated by the National Capital Commission, then I would vote for this measure so that they could make representations to this committee. I know a great number of people who belong to the Home Owners Association in the green belt who have made representations on many occasions to me, to the former member for Carleton and everybody in the National Capital Commission but without great success. If the passage of this measure will give these people another opportunity to state their grievances, then I am in favour of it. I