

Adjournment Debate

a broad range of opinions on likely developments, on a geographic distribution basis which would influence the demand for federal office accommodation.

The article in the *Gazette* merely refers to a summary of these opinions, and I repeat that they are just that—opinions. While they are possibly of some usefulness to the department as input into the continuous studies necessary for good forward planning, they are being cross-referenced with many other sources of information and will play only a minor role in the final picture which the department arrives at for long term planning purposes.

I would add that this is the first use the department has made of this particular sampling technique. As a tentative conclusion, I may say the technique appears to contain a fatal flaw in that most people, when asked their opinion as to the future, tend simply to project the present into the future. This defeats the whole purpose of seeking informed opinion on the likelihood of major changes over the long term and their probable impact. I might say, too, that once the study has been completed it will be used for internal federal accommodation planning purposes only.

In answer to the supplemental question, "Was the Department of Regional Economic Expansion consulted in the carrying out of this study?", I repeat that the study has not yet been completed; DREE will be consulted at length as the study progresses.

URBAN AFFAIRS—LAND ASSEMBLY—REQUEST FOR
MEASURES TO ASSIST MUNICIPALITIES RETAIN GREEN
SPACES

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to see in his place the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. De Bané), my colleague and friend. I trust he will be able to give me a better answer than I received from his minister on October 7. I am not holding my breath, because time is going by and I am allowed only seven minutes.

The subject I wish to raise tonight relates to the question I addressed to the minister on October 7. I asked him specifically whether there was any government program to assist municipalities which were trying to retain green space which was privately owned and which would otherwise be lost to development. The minister failed to answer that question, but I think it can be taken from the transcript in *Hansard* at page 164 that, in fact, there was no such program. When I mentioned a specific problem in the City of Vancouver in the riding of Vancouver South, that of the Langara lands, the minister said:

My ministry is working on that plan very closely with officials of the city so that the specific case referred to will come within the overall plan.

The minister is not here tonight. I have great respect for the hon. gentleman, but when he gave that answer he obviously did not know what he was talking about. The lands in question are lands owned by the CPR as part of the land grant made many years ago. They have been used basically as a golf course until now. Vancouver has been able to purchase some of this land, and there are about 100 acres left.

Vancouver has purchased from the Canadian Pacific development company the remaining acreage at a cost of

[Mr. Turner (London East).]

\$400 million, and the city authorities do not have the money to pay for it. As a consequence they propose to take 20 acres, incredibly valuable recreational land in the centre of the city, and subdivide it to pay for the remainder. Plans have been drawn up by a citizens' committee in the area in the hope of saving this land, and it seems to me the committee has a far more perceptive understanding of the value of this land than either the federal government or the other levels of government involved.

● (2220)

The result of their efforts was that the provincial government has been prepared to pick up two parcels of land, one for the adjacent Glengarry College for a campus, and another for a green space out of its green space fund, which leaves the city to pick up the remaining seven acres for \$1.5 million. In effect this plan would give the whole of this acreage to the city of Vancouver for a cost to the city of \$1.5 million.

During the recent election campaign the Conservative party was able to make a commitment that if we succeeded in the election we would immediately sit down with the citizens' committee, the city of Vancouver and the province of British Columbia, and enter into a shared cost program to pick up this remaining land, so that together with the province we would save this vital piece of green space in the city of Vancouver.

It is interesting to note that in the 1972 federal campaign the Liberal party had no trouble at all committing \$30 million of their money—I do not know where they got it from, but I have no objection to their spending it—to acquire waterfront land for the city of Toronto for parks. I am completely in accord with this decision, but I cannot understand why such decisions are made on an ad hoc basis and always in the middle of an election.

At the same time I would point out that when the city of Vancouver was trying to re-acquire the Department of National Defence lands at Jericho during that same election, the Liberal party failed somehow to recognize the significance of this, and of course it was a matter of some concern to the city citizens of Vancouver to find \$30 million spent in Toronto with nothing appropriated for green space in the city of Vancouver.

So my questions to my hon. friend tonight are specific. First, is the government prepared to come before this House and present to it any sort of plan whereby municipalities which are short of funds can be given federal assistance to preserve these green spaces which are already alienated and in private hands?

My second point is simply that during the election campaign the Liberal candidate and his workers in the riding of Vancouver South were very much in favour of saving this green space, and intimated that they would find federal help to save this green space for the city of Vancouver if the Liberals were returned to office. As you well know, Madam Speaker, they were returned to office.

My last question is this: if the citizens' committee, which as I said before is showing more thought and perception about the problem than anybody else so far, comes directly to the federal government and asks whether the federal government will sit down and discuss with them some means whereby a financial formula can be put to-