

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Honourable senators, I am unable to give a definite answer to my right honourable friend's question. My impression is that an appropriation for the National Capital Fund was included in the estimates of last year, and I fancy there is a similar item in this year's estimates. Unlike ordinary votes of money, an appropriation for this fund does not expire at the end of the fiscal year in which it is voted, but remains in effect until utilized; and I think that the amount standing to the credit of the fund has reached a considerable size. I believe the proposed bridge across the Rideau canal and perhaps other parts of the scheme are in process of being carried out, or at any rate that negotiations with respect to them are going on, but that the report now presented deals principally with projected undertakings which have not yet been finally approved and may in fact be modified after further consideration.

Hon. R. B. Horner: Honourable senators, I wish to make a few remarks from my own personal point of view, as I do not claim to be speaking on behalf of any party. I believe that first things should come first, and that our primary concern should be to make sure that we have a population healthy and wealthy enough to support the kind of national capital that is proposed. Instead of spending large sums on tearing down properties that are giving good service to our present population, it would be wiser to use the money in irrigating large areas of the West, and so making it possible for millions of additional people to live out there. After they had become established, the federal treasury would have a larger income to support this proposed costly scheme of beautifying Ottawa.

Perhaps my feeling about this matter is inspired to some degree by a Bible story which I remember from my boyhood days, the parable of a certain rich man. His land was yielding plentiful crops, so much so that he felt he did not have sufficient room in which to store them, and he said "I will pull down my barns, and build greater;" but just as he made up his mind to do that his soul was required of him. I suggest, honourable senators, that it would be rather unfortunate if we spent large sums of money on making our national capital more beautiful, and afterwards lost the capital to an enemy because our population was not large enough for our own defence. I suppose the parable also was intended to stress the superiority of spiritual things over material wealth. These plans for beautifying our national capital perhaps reflect a certain pride in material develop-

ment, and it might be well if we took the parable to heart, even at this date.

Hon. Norman P. Lambert: Honourable senators, I should like to say just a word about the report that has been tabled. At nearly every session the plan for the development of Ottawa as a national capital is referred to in this chamber without, seemingly, any appreciation of what has already been done about the plan or what is proposed to be done. The booklet received through the mail by every member of parliament and the extensive display of the Greber plan for Ottawa in this morning's paper are really the culmination of work done during the past five years.

Five years ago a joint committee of both houses was formed following the declaration by the former Prime Minister, Mr. King, that the capital city of Ottawa should be a fit memorial to the men who fought in the Canadian armed forces. After six weeks study that committee presented a report, which was unanimously adopted by parliament. It has formed the basis not only for the establishment of a national capital city worthy of its name, but also for the general improvement of the area within the jurisdiction of the Federal District Commission.

This subject would have received much more practical attention were we considering today the bill which should come up this year concerning a grant by the federal government to the city of Ottawa. Such a bill would have brought into direct focus the considerations which are at stake in this whole matter. Without wishing to prolong the discussion, I would venture to say that when the election is over and a new session is called in the fall, the subject of the federal grant to the city of Ottawa will bring directly to our attention the problems involved in the carrying out of this proposed plan, which is purely projective.

The Greber report is not the first of its kind; thirty years ago we had the Holt report, which in the main differed but slightly from the projected plan now before us. There are many practical problems affecting the city of Ottawa, the surrounding municipalities and the federal government. The remarks of my honourable friend from Blaine Lake (Hon. Mr. Horner) represent the natural considerations and the point of view of a person from a distant province which is at an early stage of its development and whose needs are still great. Nevertheless, the establishment in Ottawa and the surrounding district of a capital worthy of the national aspirations and sentiment of this country, is something