

National Capital Commission

Quite a few people came to give explanations and descriptions of the areas at the sessions of this committee of inquiry. As the member for Villeneuve (Mr. Dumas) has just reminded us, we heard, first of all, Major General Kennedy, formerly chairman of the federal district commission. We heard Mr. Marcel Couture, chief accountant; Mr. Jacques Greber, internationally known town-planner, who directed the commission's work for a good many years, and who now acts as their advisor; Mr. D. L. McDonald, director of planning, preparation; Mr. Allan K. Hay, general manager; Mr. Walter Walker, public relations director. We heard Mr. Stewart Bates, chairman of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation; Dr. A. E. Berry, sanitary engineer of Toronto, who spoke of water pollution; Mr. Quipp, president of the western Quebec metropolitan commission; the representations of the city of Aylmer, through Mr. Proulx, its alderman. The city of Hull was represented by its mayor, Mr. Moncion, who was assisted by the city clerk, the legal advisor, the treasurer, the engineer, the assessor, the buildings inspector, the police director, in addition to the Hull chamber of commerce, the junior chamber of commerce, the retail merchant's association, and several other associations from Quebec. All those associations were asking, on behalf of the Quebec side, a better share, as far as representation is concerned. And they were right. That is why I believe that now that we are about to revise the act, that we are considering it as a whole, it is time that those anomalies be removed.

Some might ask: "Why did you not say these things when the Liberals were in power?" Well, I said so, I made those requests and still request those things, and if I believe that our representation in the past was not in keeping with the one we should have had, I repeat that a new wrong does not right a past one. At the moment we are not looking at the past; we are concerned with the present and I urge the Prime Minister and ask all those who are in his confidence to see to it that this anomaly which exists in our area through the poor Quebec representation in the federal district commission, be removed.

We have here a bridge which is a real disgrace. For many years we have been asking for a new bridge, and the federal government has always been and still is ready to remedy the situation. The government of Ontario has given its assent but the Quebec government

is holding back saying that since the bridge is for the federal capital district, it is up to the federal government to build it. I do not want to enter into a controversy on the subject, but since we are amending the national capital act, we could also decide this matter, as such a disgrace cannot go on indefinitely. When we see traffic held up sixty or seventy-five minutes during rush hours, it is time something was done.

We have spent \$20 million on the so-called green belt. Now, a green belt is essential for several reasons. First of all, it is not so much a green belt as an intermediate zone between rural and urban areas. However if we are able to spend \$20 million to establish and maintain a green belt around a city with industrial plants—it is, indeed, necessary where there is industry—surely we can also spend over the next few years several million dollars to make the bridge practicable and eliminate the present ghastly conditions.

I respectfully request that, when we come to vote the estimates for the new national capital, we might some time include certain amounts for the building of a bridge.

Much has been said about water pollution. This water pollution has been presented like an evil mainly due to industry. I heard that matter discussed by Dr. Berry and, more recently still, we heard an expert from the Eddy Company, a chemical engineer, produce evidence to demonstrate that the industries were not the main causes of pollution. Though he admitted that they were responsible, to a certain degree, he held that such pollution for which they could be held liable could not really affect the purity of the water. He added that the great cause of pollution is the fact that sewage is poured into the river by the city of Ottawa, the city of Hull, the towns of Aylmer and Gatineau and surrounding municipalities. That problem must be settled. I am convinced that this is far beyond the means of the municipalities concerned. I will go so far as to say that this even goes beyond the capacity of the provincial governments that are quite incapable, by themselves, of assuming full responsibility in this regard. The federal government then, through the commission which is about to be set up, should hear experts representing both sides—those who claim the factories are largely responsible and those who claim that municipal sewage is mainly to blame—and attempt to determine where, exactly, this responsibility rests.