

*National Capital Commission*

resolution precedes will, therefore, in some parts of the context differ from Bill No. 417. I am confident, however, that the new bill will, as did Bill No. 417, encompass most of the amendments suggested to the joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons in 1956, and that it will also make possible the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the report of that committee.

The activities of the Ottawa improvement commission, which was set up in 1899 by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and the splendid work accomplished since 1927, reflect the contribution of this country toward the practical improvement and beautification of the capital city, more recently of the national capital region. These works reflect also the interest of parliament and the people of Canada in creating a national capital which will be a source of legitimate pride and inspiration to all Canadians.

As was explained by the Prime Minister, the joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons was appointed in 1956 to review and report upon the progress and program of the federal district commission in developing and implementing a plan for a national capital. This committee, as was mentioned this morning, reported to parliament on August 1, 1956. Amongst other recommendations, the joint committee in part VI of its report recommended that the Federal District Commission Act be revised so as to bring the definition of the powers, duties and responsibilities of the commission in line with the development of the national capital area.

Judging from the resolution which has been introduced by the Prime Minister we can feel confident that most, if not all, of that part of the recommendation contained in the report of the joint committee of 1956 will be implemented. For the benefit of those who were not here in 1956 I wish to say that each and every member of this joint committee had a keen and genuine interest in what was being done to try to create a national capital which would be the pride of all Canadians. I had the great honour of being co-chairman of this committee. I think I can say without fear of being contradicted that the members of this house and of the other place who acted on the joint committee worked very hard and did an excellent job.

The committee held 35 sessions of which 32 were entirely devoted to the study of briefs submitted by the federal district commission and by representatives of civic and public bodies including the city councils of Ottawa and Hull. The joint committee also heard

from the Auditor General of Canada, the officers of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation; the director of the division of sanitary engineering of the department of health of the province of Ontario and Mr. Jacques Greber, distinguished French town planner and consultant for the federal district commission. The co-operation of all those who appeared before the joint committee was of an extreme value to it. It helped in laying the foundation for the preparation of what I would describe as a very constructive report.

In reviewing the progress and programs of the federal district commission in developing and implementing the plan of the national capital, the members of the joint committee considered that the most important event in the history of the commission was the completion of the national plan under the supervision of Mr. Jacques Greber, with whom was associated a group of prominent Canadian planners, architects and engineers. The members of the committee thought that from this master plan a true national capital could be fashioned. They were of the opinion also that, when implemented, the national capital would be a monument around which and within which the historical and cultural interests and activities of our people could be developed.

In city planning language, the master plan is the form in which the whole project is generally first given out to the public. It shows the anticipated development of the community over a certain period, sometimes as long as 50 years or 75 years. The project shown on the plan is general as to location. It is intended to serve the purposes of a guide plan; it is elastic and easily changed. In city or town planning practice, the experts, with good reasons, always emphasized the fact that the character of the master plan should be clearly explained to the public so as to avoid the misunderstanding that this long-visioned plan is intended for full accomplishment in the immediate future at great and unusual expense.

So it should be and so it is with the national capital plan as prepared by the advisory committee headed by Mr. Jacques Greber. In brief, the master plan was designed to guide development of the capital's urban and suburban areas over the next half century. It is a flexible instrument and within its framework it is capable of adjustment to meet new requirements and changing conditions.

Members of the joint committee were very much interested in what was being done in the sphere of planning in the national capital region. They were conscious of the fact that the national capital plan should be developed as far as possible without infringing upon