

*Federal District Commission*

where. But as the hon. member suggested, in that connection it is wise to have advice as good as can be obtained, and I think the knowledge a competent landscape or town development architect has acquired over a long period of years in examining the layout of other capitals or other cities is something which can be of considerable assistance. I do not suppose there is a city in the world where mistakes have not been made. I think it wise to have the advice of one who has studied the situation elsewhere, who knows what mistakes it is necessary to guard against and who can suggest outlines and general plans to be worked out in the atmosphere of a Canadian mentality and of Canadian conditions in this federal area. I have been here only a few years and am not competent to express any views, but I am not convinced that the development of the railway terminal here has not been a mistake to a certain degree, and that it might not have been wiser and more helpful to the ultimate development of a greater federal capital to have made some other arrangements for bringing the railway systems into the city. I am not expressing that as a definite opinion, but there are those who are not convinced that some mistake was not made there.

The work being prepared under the guidance of Mr. Greber is being done here in Canada by a staff of Canadian architects and draftsmen, and is something that will make available not a plan for immediate realization but a plan which will show what kind of arrangements it would appear in the light of experience to be necessary to provide for in a national capital that might have two or three times or perhaps even more the population of present day Ottawa.

Mr. REID: In the report made by the committee the government was authorized to ask the federal district commission to call the railways together with regard to a new union station and also with regard to the elimination of their tracks. I was wondering if that authorization had been carried out.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: That matter is under consideration, and I was about to state to the committee what has been done in that connection. Last December the matter was quite fully gone into and a tentative decision arrived at to set up three committees, one to be known as a national planning committee, the second to be known as a parks committee and the third to be known as a railway committee. The national planning committee I understand has been authorized and would consist of seventeen members comprising the mayors of both Ottawa and Hull, with the

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

other members to be appointed by the federal district commission, not necessarily chosen only from among their own members, to advise on the acceptance or otherwise of this general plan as something to work to in future years. Some of the members are to be well qualified in the science and practice of town planning and to be chosen, because of the necessity for frequent meetings, largely from the cities of Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto. They are to be appointed by the federal district commission under authority of order in council P.C. 5634 of August 16, 1945. As I said, two of them are to be the mayors of Ottawa and Hull. The personnel of this committee is to serve on an honorary basis, getting only the reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in attending meetings. I may add that from the outset the whole of the work that has been done by this Ottawa improvement commission, or the federal district commission, has been done entirely without remuneration, as a voluntary and very willing contribution of public-minded citizens.

Mr. BOUCHER: A work of love.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: A work of love, to provide for the future generations of Canadians. The principal function of this national planning committee will be to meet as often as required for the purpose of laying down the broad general outline of the master plan for the capital district, with Mr. Greber acting in the capacity of a consultant, a capacity which I understood the hon. member for Eglinton to favour in his address last evening. The actual work is being done at the expense of the federal district commission by a staff which I understand now consists of thirteen members, architects, draftsmen and so forth, working under the general direction of Mr. Greber. This national planning committee will report to the government through the commission and will advise the commission as to the subsequent and gradual development of the general scheme, as and when conditions appear to make it opportune to undertake it.

The second committee which has not yet been formally set up by by-law of the federal district commission, but which is under consideration, could not operate effectively it was felt, until the general plan was available. This parks committee would have a membership of five persons chosen by the federal district commission from the federal capital area, persons who have in particular displayed a keen interest in the formation and development of Gatineau park. Its chief duty would be to advise as to the management and further development of Gatineau park and