

dynamic culture of Canada in her centennial year.

• (5:10 p.m.)

Foresight, determination and haste—and I emphasize haste—are now needed to enhance the quality and character of the city. Sir, Ottawa is not a fully planned capital in the sense of Washington, Canberra or Brasilia. But the influence of the National Capital Commission and its predecessors has been profound. This parliament should assure even greater support of municipal and other services as a matter of urgent, national priority.

This bill deals only with one aspect of the problem, but it is an important one. It would make mandatory the appointment of a green belt advisory committee responsible for the administration and development of the green belt as a unique and imaginative concept in national capital planning.

Hon. members from other parts of Canada may not be fully familiar with the green belt and the tremendous investment which the people of Canada now have in this area. The original concept of a green belt surrounding the national capital and defining and controlling its physical limits stems from the report of Mr. Jacques Gréber. He defined his proposal in his famous report as follows:

In the centre, the urban region is delimited by a perimeter, intended to prohibit tentacular and linear extensions of constructions abutting upon highways. To that effect an area, zoned as a green belt, frames this perimeter and is subjected to regulations to protect the area comprised within the green belt against undesirable development. Outside of the extreme limit of this green belt, the territory will retain its rural character, with the exception of limited and controlled minor and appropriate developments.

No action of an effective nature was taken until June 18, 1958, when the right hon. gentleman from Prince Albert, as prime minister, announced the decision of the government to acquire ownership of the green belt by purchase or expropriation so as to, in his words, "ensure that the development of the capital area over the long term future will be in accordance with the national importance and significance of this city." The words of the right hon. gentleman from Prince Albert at page 1381 of *Hansard* of June 18, 1958, are worth repeating:

I should like to emphasize that this is a long-term project undertaken in the national interest. It is not a short-term one nor one that has been undertaken at the request of the local municipalities. Experience has shown that unless effectual control is exercised, cities tend to sprawl out into suburbs, resulting in what is called ribbon development, in a manner that is quite contrary to and

National Capital Act

inconsistent with the long-term planning that is necessary and essential if the capital of Canada is to be preserved and developed so that it will be a capital city of which this generation and succeeding generations can and will be proud.

By investing a reasonable sum now to acquire title to the lands on the boundaries of the city the people of Canada, through parliament, can be assured of that control which is necessary before further developments take place which may indeed result in action being taken too late. During the early years after the land is acquired the rents received for it may not be as much as the interest on the funds borrowed to purchase the lands in question, but the government is confident that over the long-term period the investment will be found to be worth while financially, as well as being necessary to achieve the important purpose which we and the people of Canada as a whole, I believe, have in mind and desire.

The result of this decision communicated to the house in those words on June 18, 1958, has meant that the people of Canada are now the owners of a green belt surrounding the national capital consisting of 41,390 acres, for which to date \$34,241,578 of public money has been advanced or loaned and for which, according to estimate, an additional \$5 million will be needed to complete the program. This is a total public investment by way of loans or advances of almost \$40 million.

Many of the methods of the National Capital Commission in expropriating and acquiring the green belt were an anathema to some of my constituents; but these decisions have been taken and there is no use crying over spilled milk. This does not necessarily mean that we have reached the end, however, of green belt expropriations. According to that very distinguished journalist, Mr. Richard Jackson, the government is planning to extend the green belt to an area of 900 square miles. Whether this be true or not, I have learned never to discount the informed predictions of Mr. Jackson. But whether at its present or an expanded acreage, what concerns me and what this bill is all about is the management of this \$40 million asset belonging to the Canadian people, an asset bound to increase in value as the years go on.

Any area of 41,000 acres requires knowledgeable, competent management by expert persons and, quite frankly, this is what the National Capital Commission has lacked. I have the highest respect for the commission itself, its chairman, its general manager and staff with one exception—a man who should be confined to outer darkness because he has done more to set back the cause of national capital planning and frustrate the good will essential thereto than is conceivable or could