

*City of Ottawa Agreement*

commission should be carried out, and this would seem an appropriate moment for the minister to emphasize that point of view in any discussion with the city fathers.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: May I ask a question? Two or three times the right hon. gentleman referred to some understanding between the previous government and the city, with regard to Confederation park and any further building in that area by the city. Would he be good enough to say whether there was any agreement or understanding between his government and the city authorities in regard to the city hall, or any other buildings which might be owned by the city in Confederation park, and if so, what was the agreement?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: An exchange of letters took place between the government and the city authorities and the federal district commission. These communications will make quite clear what the understanding was. I have not the communications with me at the moment, but I will be glad to have them placed on the table of the house, and I know the government have copies of them. The whole purpose and understanding is made perfectly clear in those communications. There can be no doubt that the government of the day would not have asked parliament to vote sums of money for the expropriation of that particular area, the old Russell house, the Russell theatre, and the other buildings, spending two or three million dollars on those improvements, if it had not been distinctly agreed by the city that they would cooperate in the large scheme of making a central park.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: Distinctly agreed in writing?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, the communications were in writing. They set forth what was agreed to in the several interviews between the government, the federal district commission and the city. There is one phrase in the correspondence which, I understand, has given rise at the moment to some comment. It is to the effect that the city will cooperate to the extent to which the taxpayers approve, or something of the kind. Naturally they must have the approval of the taxpayers in whatever they may do. The intention or meaning of that phrase, however, was not that the scheme as a whole should be presented to the taxpayers of Ottawa to be approved by them; it was that as particular by-laws were necessitated under the city's method of procedure, those by-laws would be submitted. Of course, if the by-laws were

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

defeated, the city would find it impossible to proceed, but as I have said, they did submit a by-law having regard to the widening of Elgin street, and a further by-law, I think it was, it may have been one and the same, with regard to the expropriation of the Knox church property. The citizens approved of those by-laws, and at that time the citizens had the whole park scheme before them. So I think, impliedly, the citizens already have given full consent to the general scheme. The one point that was made clear at the time was that no new buildings should be permitted to go up within that area. The city itself, I believe, has to give a licence or some permission to enable any buildings to be erected.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): A building permit.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, and it was understood that no building permit would be given by the city within that area, and that as buildings fell into disuse their sites would become available as part of the park area. But for that undertaking the government and the city alike, would have been simply improving the properties of the very few individuals who have a bit of property in that area, giving to each of them a very special building site.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): With regard to this resolution, I notice that an error has been made in the date. It should be for one year from July 1, 1930, instead of from June 1, 1930.

The object of this resolution is to authorize the introduction of a bill which contains special provisions with respect to matters in which both the city of Ottawa and the Dominion of Canada are represented. The agreement was entered into in the year 1920, and was approved by an act of parliament which is chapter 15 of the statutes of that year. Most of the terms of that agreement are of comparatively little interest now, but provision is made for an annual payment to the city of Ottawa as compensation for water supply for fire protection and for street sprinkling and sprinkling in parks and driveways. The amount provided in the agreement of 1920 was \$75,000, which was later increased to \$100,000. That agreement of 1920 was extended in 1924 for one year, and in 1925 for a period of five years, expiring on July 1, 1930. The passing of this resolution, and of the act to be based upon it, will authorize the payment to the city of Ottawa of \$100,000 for the year expiring on July 1, 1931, for these