

Supply—Federal District Commission

Mr. McIvor: Mr. Chairman, at this point I should like to express my appreciation to the federal district commission for having given us permission to play our outstanding ball game on the front lawn. They are allowing us that privilege again this year one week from Wednesday.

Item agreed to.

310. To authorize payment of the sixth instalment to a special account in the consolidated revenue fund, known as the national capital fund, established under vote No. 809, Appropriation Act, 4, 1947-48, \$2,500,000.

Mr. Higgins: I think this is the correct item if it takes in the question of land which is to be expropriated for the national capital plan. Recently, within the past month although I am not quite certain of the date, there was an announcement by the big factory across the river that they planned improvements and that they were not going to await the capital planning people taking them over. In fact they went so far as to suggest that there would not be enough money to buy them out. I would like to ask the Prime Minister about the situation over at that plant.

Mr. St. Laurent: Mr. Chairman, the federal district commission is an autonomous body that has to get approval of the governor in council for its acquisitions whether they be voluntary or by way of expropriation. It has been in existence now for something over 50 years and has, I think, been doing a very useful and satisfactory job for the Canadian people. This is set out in considerable detail in the 53rd annual report which I laid on the table of this house on January 19, 1953.

The hon. gentleman asks what is going to become of the industries across the river. Well, up to the present time I think the presence of those industries there has had a significance which has been appreciated by all visitors to Ottawa. Ottawa, its development and its prosperity, have historically been due in a large measure to lumber industries. Up to the present time those industries across the river have been a concrete demonstration to all visitors that the capital, like any other place in Canada, is still young, still close to the pioneering days, and that we still remember that we owe much for their start and their prosperous development to those industries.

I know there have been negotiations between the officers of the federal district commission and the gentleman who controls the stock of those industrial concerns. There are negotiations, if you want to call them such, under way at the present time; and a sort of indefinite proposal was submitted some months ago to the federal district commission to bring about the establishment of additions

to those plants at some removed point. The federal district commission submitted a questionnaire in order to find out just exactly what the proposal involved. The commission was told that it would take quite a considerable time to answer the questions.

I hope that whatever developments are made in this industry—and like other Canadian industries I suppose it is bound to develop—they will be made in such a way that when the appropriate time comes for the ultimate displacement of that industry there will be nothing involved by way of damages or compensation for interruption of operations. That matter has been discussed with the owners and I think they appreciate that some day there will be a removal of those plants to another site. I think they have already acquired the site which they intend to develop; and I am sure they will proceed in such a way that when removal has to be made they will not be in a position where they must ask for compensation for an interruption of their operations.

Mr. Adamson: The Prime Minister has achieved a nicety of language in referring to pioneering. In the future when we have that sulphite smell I shall consider it to be a pioneering rather than a primitive smell.

Mr. Higgins: I thank the Prime Minister for his remarks, which were very clear; but it does sound very much to me like a Kathleen Mavourneen proposition. The eventual removal will take place, but when is a question that no one can answer as yet. It will be done some time in the future.

Mr. St. Laurent: The owner agrees that it is bound to come, and has been very reasonable in the attitude adopted. He has expressed the hope that his company will be able to co-operate in such a way that when removal must take place it can be done merely by paying the value of what will be taken and not by paying heavy indemnities for interruption of operations while another plant is being established.

Mr. Higgins: There is nothing that can be done about making additional improvements now; the plant has to keep up with the industry?

Mr. St. Laurent: I understand that new machines have to be added, and there was a serious question about whether one whole part of the industry could not be removed right away. To that proposal the chairman submitted a long questionnaire so he would be able to determine in his own mind what the commission would be getting into. The