

*National Capital Commission*

the legislation to be introduced for the development and improvement of the national capital region.

You will recall, sir, that on April 8, 1957, the former prime minister, Mr. St. Laurent, as reported at page 3274 of *Hansard* of that date, introduced a resolution in terms similar to those of the resolution now before us. The resolution was passed and the bill in furtherance of the resolution received first reading. Mr. St. Laurent on that occasion said, as reported at page 3276:

It would be this government's intention, if it is returned to office, to introduce a bill at the first session of the new parliament.

On the same page, making reference to the non-partisan spirit of support for the measure for the improvement of the national capital, he added these words:

—whoever happens to be constituting the government when parliament reassembles will, I am sure, be appreciative of any suggestions which in the meantime are sent to the privy council office, with the object of improving this bill in order that when it is brought forward again it may be the best legislation which those responsible for considering it here and in the other place can possibly devise.

The reason for giving the bill first reading was simply to assure that interested parties should have the opportunity of making their suggestions with a view to ensuring that when introduced the legislation would contain all the beneficial changes believed to be necessary.

As the house knows, in 1956 a joint committee of the House of Commons and the other place made recommendations which are set forth in the minutes of proceedings dated August 1, 1956. In summary and in effect the plan was to enlarge the national capital region from the present area of 900 square miles to an area of 1,850 square miles. I am not going to read to the committee the various recommendations set forth in this report, but I do recommend their consideration by hon. members. The committee sat for a considerable period of time, with 32 sessions for the hearing of evidence, and made its recommendations which were generally and unanimously accepted. However, I should refer to the general purport and purpose of the setting up of the committee, as appears from the report in question at page 1049:

Since the time of the last report the most significant event in the history of the federal district commission was the completion of the national capital plan under the supervision of M. Jacques Greber. We have received no evidence to suggest that plan should be abandoned. Since ours is the first committee to have it, we desire to say we believe that, from it, a national capital worthy of this country and of its people can be fashioned. We believe that when it is implemented it will be

a monument around which and within which the historical and cultural interests and activities of our people can be developed.

The various matters connected with the setting up of the plan were discussed, and part V of the report at page 1052 sets forth in general the recommendations of the committee. In first position is set out the recommendation that a project of basic importance to be undertaken and completed in the national capital area should be the elimination of the causes of pollution of the Ottawa river. Another project of importance set out is the completion of the ten-mile section of the essential elements of the Queensway within the city of Ottawa. It suggests that the federal district commission is to be commended for the action it took to establish rail-freight facilities in the Walkley road area, thus completing the first stage of the railway relocation program. It refers to the bridge facilities across the Ottawa river as being inadequate in the downtown sections of Ottawa and Hull. It recommends the setting up of a green belt, which it suggests could be better described as the intermediate zone between the urban and rural areas, comprising a strip of land approximately one and one-half miles wide extending from the outer limits of Ottawa and Hull.

It states that the green belt area was originally contained in the national capital plan in 1950. It deals with the Gatineau park in the province of Quebec, and observes that provision for that park forms an important part of the national capital scheme.

Finally, after those recommendations with respect to policy, it recommends that the name of the act, which is the Federal District Commission Act, be changed to the national capital act. Then there are further recommendations of a technical or routine nature.

Some weeks ago I announced the establishment of the green belt as Ottawa's planned future urban limits. The green belt was advocated for some 10 years, and in the form in which it is set up about three fifths will be in the township of Gloucester and the remainder, except for about 1,000 acres within Ottawa, will be in the township of Nepean.

The act which the bill to be submitted will repeal, and for which the present bill will be substituted if parliament passes it, is the Federal District Commission Act of 1926. The bill upon which this bill is founded, as I said a moment ago, was introduced by Mr. St. Laurent on April 8, 1957, as Bill No. 417. The present bill is in large measure a repetition of the terms of the earlier bill, changed only to the extent of suggestions made to the privy council for consideration and decision by the government.