

National Capital Commission

former prime minister, Mr. St. Laurent, in 1957, a good deal was said about the operations of the commission itself; that is, how it was proposed to be set up. I wonder whether the Prime Minister would feel free to tell the committee just what he envisages in that respect?

There was some discussion about an executive committee, the size of the commission and that sort of thing. That raises the question of the chairmanship of the commission. Always, until the very last few years, the chairman of the federal district commission received no compensation whatever. The work of the commission has become so onerous now that it is getting to be a full-time job requiring the time of a thoroughly competent, full-time man. Can the Prime Minister tell us what he envisages in that respect? What are the plans?

Then there are some smaller matters, but it seems to me this is the proper place to raise them. There is the very important matter dealt with by the committee, namely the pollution of the Ottawa river. I may tell persons who do not know and who think it is a dirty river that it is a wonderful river. It is dirty in this area because we people have polluted it. It is actually a very clean stream, and I myself have caught Quebec red trout in the Ottawa river not very far from here. In areas where there are no towns to pollute the river it is naturally very clean; it is a magnificent river.

A good deal of discussion, with which I was familiar at the time, went on with the former government about sewage disposal in the city of Ottawa and the part of the federal government in that. The subject is very much a live issue again at the municipal level, and action is being taken. If the Prime Minister is in a position today to tell us—I do not know whether he is or not—I would ask him to tell us what he can about the participation of the federal government in that scheme. If he is not in a position to tell us I will understand because I know that these things require some negotiation. I think he will also appreciate my interest to get on with the scheme as quickly as possible and have this pollution stopped. I could express myself in very strong language on that but perhaps there is no need for it. I think all hon. members share the same view as I do on that matter and when I was sitting here this afternoon I could not help but recall the views expressed by the late Dr. Blair on the subject. For my part, I wish that he was here today to encourage the government to do all it can to speed up the solving of that problem.

[Mr. McIlraith.]

There are some other smaller matters. When this work was carried on by the Ottawa improvement commission, at one stage it was thought that the south boundary of the city was in what is now the centre town section and the driveway system, which we are all proud of now, extended along what is now Clemow avenue and Monkland. That was under the Ottawa improvement commission but it is now under the jurisdiction of the federal district commission. Owing to some legal technical difficulties it is very difficult to have that removed from the jurisdiction of the federal district commission and put back under the jurisdiction of the city where, I think, most persons concerned with the maintenance of those streets agree that it belongs. As I see the legal problems, the way to clear them up is by provincial legislation and I would hope that the Prime Minister might find a moment in his busy days to draw that fact to the attention of the appropriate provincial authorities so that the necessary provincial legislation can be enacted to put the matter under the jurisdiction of the city.

There is also a small thing that somewhat alarms me. I understand that it is proposed to put parking meters on Wellington street immediately in front of parliament hill. I am not absolutely sure of my facts but I understand that is so. If there is anything in it I hope the Prime Minister will use his office to see that it is not done or even have his Minister of Public Works do what he can to see that it does not take place.

Mr. Green: It has nothing to do with me.

Mr. McIlraith: I think I can help the Prime Minister a little bit here. I think there may be some work done by the Department of Public Works or some spending of the taxpayers' money. There used to be and I would ask the minister to check that closely. I know it is a small thing but I find that the combination of small things can interfere with something much bigger. I hope the Prime Minister does not mind me mentioning these smaller things at this time.

There are other matters but there will be an opportunity to ask about them in more detail later. I should also like the Prime Minister to tell us what main projects he has in mind requiring a substantial expenditure of money in the immediately foreseeable future. These things take time to develop fully. I am particularly interested in aspects. In 1947 expropriation proceedings were started with regard to properties along the Ottawa river with a view to completing the driveway system along the river in a westerly direction from the centre of the city. The expropriations are completed and