

*National Capital Commission*

such a place and role in the hearts of Canadians as have these ancient cities in the hearts of their nationals I firmly believe, and that must be our objective.

I am one of those who believe that God favoured this valley of the Ottawa on both sides of the river with a natural beauty and a distinctive aesthetic charm equal to that of any part of the globe. To take full advantage of that beauty and natural charm is the whole purpose of the national capital plan.

In its conception and in its latest delineation before the joint parliamentary committee in 1956, so ably presided over by the hon. member for Villeneuve, that plan is a bold and imaginative design for the future. What is now needed, and what I hope this legislation will represent, is a firm, clear-cut declaration of faith in that national capital plan and a call to action in its rapid and progressive implementation.

The problem of planning the national capital, sir, is stated simply, succinctly and effectively in a brief presented to the Prime Minister by the national capital region branch of the community planning association of Canada in May, 1958, from which I would like to quote very briefly:

Any procedure which is developed must take into account:

1. The urge to have a capital city as a symbol.
2. The authority to enable this to be effected.
3. The ability to create the symbol.

It is from federal sources that the stimulus for a national capital can be expected. The authority to enable planning lies with the provinces. Co-operation between the federal and provincial governments can provide the inspiration and authority. The detailed task of planning lies with the municipalities. There is a role to be played by each level of government. Through good will and co-operation the best result can be achieved.

This quotation, sir, points up precisely what is the major problem of national capital planning. In the past there has been a serious lack of co-ordination of planning activity. There has been project planning, fine project planning, some of the finest project planning that has gone on in any part of the world, but no comprehensive, integrated, co-ordinated planning of the whole national capital area; a plan, yes, but planning, no.

In those six words, Mr. Chairman, I think is a simple statement of the very complex and difficult problem which does exist. To too great an extent the existing planning authorities, federal, provincial and municipal, have worked in compartments, have failed to achieve real co-operation and real understanding. Perhaps the best illustration of compartmentalized planning is the total absence of an official plan for Ottawa or for

any of the neighbouring municipalities pursuant to the planning act of Ontario, despite the fact that the final Greber report was presented more than eight years ago. All that exists today is an official highway plan.

The federal district commission is now contributing to the preparation of an official plan or plans, and I hope we shall have such before the tenth anniversary of the Greber report. I mention this, sir, to illustrate my view that, faced with our problems of constitutional jurisdiction, the first requisite to success in national capital planning is a co-ordination of the activities of the federal district commission, now to be replaced by the national capital commission, and the planning authorities of Ontario, of the city of Ottawa and of the area municipalities, particularly on the Ontario shore the townships of Nepean and Gloucester and on the Quebec shore the city of Hull and the town of Aylmer. The opportunity for full understanding, the opportunity for complete co-ordination and full and continuing liaison, exists today as it has not existed at any time previously. This, I submit, is the psychological time to achieve a unity of purpose in all our planning activities.

The solution of the vexed green belt issue makes the immediate co-operation of Nepean and Gloucester possible. As long as that green belt issue existed, as long as it continued unsettled, the whole national capital plan could not get beyond a stalemate. As I have already said, the government and the Prime Minister in particular are to be congratulated upon the decision to acquire the green belt. This, in my view, is the most significant decision taken in many years, and upon it hinges the solution of many other vital problems of planning.

But with this I should like to couple a word of warning. The basic purposes of the green belt will not be served if an uneconomical, undesirable sprawl development takes place just outside it. Development could simply leapfrog over the green belt and fringe settlements of an unplanned type take place. What is needed? I suggest to the new national capital commission that what is needed is assistance to Nepean and Gloucester in planning, the encouragement of hamlet development particularly at Blackburn Corners and Bells Corners, the encouragement of planned development of existing satellite communities such as Manotick, Richmond, Stittsville and Carp. I suggest that these are essential concomitants of the green belt plan. To the satisfactory adjustment of these fringe problems Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation can contribute as much—if not more than the new national capital commission.