

Mr. CROUSE: To what extent do we acquire property? There must be a plan covering the acquisition of lands for the green belt. How many miles would this plan cover? Is it 10, 15, 20, or how many miles from Ottawa?

Mr. BRYCE: I did not bring the plan; I am sorry. Roughly it is a belt about a mile to a mile and a half wide around the city from the river on one side and around back to the river on the other. If I am not mistaken I think it nearly all has been acquired now, but as Mr. Long said, in some cases the settlements have not been finalized. The main acquisitions going on now are in respect of what is called the LeBreton flats. This is being acquired in order to be used by the government for buildings and for development by the national capital commission for parkways, roadways and park purposes.

I might make one point in respect of Mr. Long's observations which are quite germane and certainly should be considered by the committee. I agree in general that we want to test the assets which we put in our statement of assets in the balance sheet, and which we do not charge to expenditures right away; we want to have a test in respect of whether they are immediately available like cash, or whether they yield us a financial revenue. The difficulty here is that this yields us some revenue. I am not as pessimistic as Mr. Long. I think it will yield us more and more revenue as time goes on. Because the uses of the green belt by no means are restricted to farming purposes, as time goes on, we should get more revenue out of it.

There is a conflict here between what is desirable for the reasons I have mentioned—firstly, to enable parliament to know the cost to hold this land; and, secondly, to keep the proper managerial pressure on the commission to get the revenue it can out of it—and this problem of the value of the assets we keep on our balance sheet.

I do not like to put any assets on our balance sheet which are neither available like cash or would yield us any revenue; I disagree with the principle. However, here we have a case where it yields us a partial revenue. On the other side of the balance sheet we do offset this by having a general reserve against active assets. Whether we should do something to add to that reserve in some way or another to reflect this partial situation might be something to be considered.

Mr. HARKNESS: Part of the green belt is used the same as any other government property for government purposes. The Uplands airport constitutes part of the green belt, and the new experimental farm constitutes part of the green belt. These properties are used just the same as any other government property here in the city which is not dealt with in this way. So, the value of those, at least, should be subtracted from the total cost factor, and probably the remainder written down to a more realistic figure in respect of its income producing ability.

Mr. BRYCE: My understanding of the way this is intended to work is that when some of the green belt land is put to government use—you mentioned the experimental farm and Uplands airport—the government is supposed to pay the commission for the land.

Mr. LONG: I am not sure about the airport. I do not think there is any airport property in this figure in respect of the green belt.

Mr. HARKNESS: It is all in the green belt.

Mr. LONG: I do not think that it has been acquired as green belt property. The experimental farm is an interesting case. It was charged to an appropriation one or two years ago in one large amount, and not as the individual properties were acquired. This land really is not yet in use, although I believe there was a contract let the other day for fencing. However, it is there and the minister at that time was faced with this entire expenditure of well