

*National Capital Commission*

welcome this resolution. I must say that I am very glad it has now been brought forward.

It is rather interesting to note the development over the years of this whole concept. The first commission was known as the Ottawa improvement commission and as the country and the capital developed, the name was changed and the powers under the legislation were also changed and enlarged. From 1927 on the commission was known as the federal district commission. We are today taking one more step through the resolution we are now discussing and which, as I understand it, proposes among other things to change the name of the commission to the national capital commission.

When one considers the whole subject and what has been done thus far, he cannot but admire the foresight of the persons who dealt with this matter in the early days, when it was not a popular subject which gained universal support in all parts of the country. For my own part I would like to acknowledge the foresight of the politicians in all parties back as far as the late 1890's and in the years since. One cannot but feel indebted to these politicians for their work which, in relation to their times, was of very real importance. I would also like to say a word of appreciation for the work done by the members of the various commissions and by the employees of those commissions. Such work, especially in the case of the commissioners, who receive no compensation, and the employees who have received inadequate compensation, deserves acknowledgment and commendation. I wish to express my appreciation to them and have it placed on the record.

The resolution stage, I suppose, is the stage at which questions on this subject should be asked but before asking some questions I should like to make one or two more general remarks which I think must be borne in mind when considering this proposal. A great deal has been said about the non-partisan nature of this measure. At the risk of being somewhat repetitious I should like to reiterate those words and point out that there is a real need for approaching this matter in a non-partisan way. That genuine need arises for two main reasons altogether outside of this house, one of them being a need for having what is achieved in national capital development appreciated by Canadians from all parts of the country regardless of their political outlook or affiliation.

There is also another very practical reason—and in dealing with legislation we have to be practical—and that is that it is inevitable with regard to this subject that we come up against the problem of provincial and

municipal jurisdiction. Indeed, in some of these problems I confess I am not quite clear where federal jurisdiction ends and provincial jurisdiction begins and where municipal jurisdiction begins and ends. In any event as a practical matter it is important that any real work that is done be accomplished with the concurrence and approval, tacit or otherwise, of all three levels of government in the particular areas concerned. We must bear in mind the number of municipalities involved, the difficulties local in nature that these municipalities have, the common financial difficulties with which they are all faced and the underlying question of provincial jurisdiction in this whole matter. When one considers these matters one appreciates the necessity for always seeking to treat this resolution and the measures that will follow it as non-partisan measures.

I must be frank to admit that this does involve some problems. It very often means that one has to forbear when one would perhaps like to differ a bit concerning some small, relatively unimportant phase of a matter that is brought forward for discussion. One must refrain from stepping in to strongly attack an individual concerning some question of policy. But I believe the forbearance from taking a partisan approach is worth while and will eventually lead us all to realize more quickly the end which we have in mind and hope to achieve through this legislation.

I have always felt that it is particularly fortunate that Ottawa was chosen as the capital of this nation. Lest some hon. gentlemen think I say that merely because at the moment I happen to have the honour of representing a part of this capital city I hasten to assure them that is not my reason for stating that view. The truth of the matter is that the concept of this great country and its history is very accurately expressed through the idea of a capital city with its government buildings located on top of a cliff overlooking a magnificent river. In the case of Ottawa the parliament buildings are high on a cliff overlooking the beautiful Ottawa river across which there is the magnificent panorama of the hills of another province. I have always had difficulty expressing in words my concept of the background and history of Canada but that concept is symbolized and given eloquent physical expression through the present location of the capital buildings being located on the Ottawa river with more poignancy than any words of mine could depict. I find my own ability with the English language wholly inadequate to express my ideas in this regard. Nonetheless I adhere to those ideas and seek on occasions where I can to lend my support