

present. A large number of votes for Ottawa were passed the other night in committee of supply without one question being asked, and I do not think we should be spending money in that way.

I believe the city of Ottawa should receive its proper due, but it should be remembered that it is to receive a grant of \$300,000 in exchange for exemptions of property from taxation and services rendered by the municipality. I suggest that the time has come when there should be equality of treatment along the lines indicated, for every other municipality that gives federal property services. The government now intends to branch out and take in the city of Hull. Its scheme embraces a radius of thirty miles. The taxpayers are being asked for fabulous sums of money today. In 1896 and 1897, in the time of Sir Charles Tupper and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, our estimates amounted to \$36 million; then it went up gradually to about \$425 million, and now our civilian estimates amount to a billion and a half.

I do not think the time is appropriate for such a grand programme as this. Where is the plan and survey for such a scheme and cost? What is more, Canadian engineers do not seem to be good enough. We must bring men in from France and Europe and other countries when we can get capable men from our own Canadian universities. Posterity will have to pay for this expensive programme which the government proposes to undertake. There ought to be some sanity about these expenditures when more houses are needed. The time may come later when we ought to have a federal district commission, but this is not the time, and the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) is not here to explain the bill.

We have had a federal commission in Ottawa for a great many years and members of parliament have never been asked to look over their work. The government is now going to step into another province and make the work cover two provinces. That sort of thing is all very well for the United States, with a population of 135 million or 40 million, but I do not think it should be undertaken in Canada at the present time without at least consulting the provinces, especially the old provinces of Ontario and Quebec. The people should be asked to vote on it. The city of Ottawa should be asked to vote on it. I suggest to the Acting Prime Minister that it would be well for him to lay this bill, as only a secondary one, until next session.

As regards the proposal to appoint fifteen men to the commission, if you are going to run the federal district commission by provinces, by geographical area, rather than from

the commercial point of view, you are making a great mistake. When the city of Toronto took over the transportation system and formed a commission some people wanted to have a political commission set up, but we appointed only three commissioners and they did the work quite efficiently. I do not believe in having too many men on a commission of this sort, who never direct and are only figureheads. The commission that has been running the light, power and transportation system in our province has given satisfaction. This is true of both the provincial and municipal commissions. It has made a great success of that undertaking from the commercial aspect, with large surpluses.

This whole question should be given further consideration. This bill which proposes to amend the act of 1927 is going to be very wide in scope. The government will be acquiring property; as I say, it will be branching out into another province; and if you have a commission of fifteen men the whole thing will be run by provincial and geographical considerations. We should have a report on the subject. I do not see why we could not appoint Canadian engineers, when wanted, from our own universities. There is no need for us to go outside Canada if we want to get able men.

This is only one of the secondary bills which the government is proposing, and in my opinion it should strike about twenty of them off the list so as to enable the house to get through at the end of next week.

Mr. W. R. THATCHER (Moose Jaw): There are just a couple of comments I wish to make on this bill. As I said the other day, I agree with the principle of it. Most Canadians, I believe, wish to see a beautiful capital city. But, like the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Church), I do not think the timing is appropriate. Perhaps I fail to grasp the significance of this important bill, or perhaps, as was suggested the other day, my outlook is provincial. Be that as it may, there are certain clauses which I cannot support at the present time.

The bill makes two main financial proposals. In the first place, it will increase the grant to the commission from \$200,000 to \$300,000 a year. In the second place, it plans to give to the commission an additional sum of \$3,000,000 in the near future. I think this house should seriously consider the latter provision because it looks as if the Greber plan is to be started almost immediately. If the newspaper reports are correct, this plan may ultimately mean the expenditure of as much as \$300 million. I do not know whether