

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): Mr. Greber left Ottawa ten days ago to go back to France after spending nearly five weeks here. He was directing the personnel of thirteen in the Hunter building, Canadian architects and draftsmen who under the direction of Mr. Greber are preparing the master plan. Mr. Greber will be back probably in three or four months and hopes to have a plan prepared for the approval of the federal authorities and the municipal authorities surrounding the capital city. Before any definite plan is decided upon all these bodies will be consulted and have an opportunity to express their views as to the usefulness of making changes in the suggested plan. The joint committee that sat in 1944 recommended the preparation of this plan, including the setting up of the committees which the Minister of Justice mentioned, a planning committee and a railway committee. These two committees have not yet been set up but the federal district commission has passed a by-law which was confirmed by order in council some time ago for the setting up of a planning committee composed of Canadian architects representing the two cities and even the surrounding municipalities across the river. This planning committee has been set on foot but it has not sat yet because Mr. Greber happens to be the consultant to that committee. On his return to Canada we hope that the members of that committee will have been appointed and that the committee will study with Mr. Greber and the local authorities the completion of this plan.

Mr. BRACKEN: My only comment in connection with the remarks of the minister is that it is to be regretted that when we are considering a measure of this importance we could not have before us the latest report or recommendation by Mr. Greber. In that connection may I ask the minister in charge of the bill or the Minister of Public Works whether the federal district commission was responsible for the development of Confederation square?

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): I am glad the hon. member brought up that matter. Those who lived in Ottawa ten years ago will remember the situation at the corner of Sparks and Rideau streets. They will recall the old Russell hotel, the old post office and the other buildings that were there at that time. In those days Ottawa had a population of about 125,000 or 130,000, but during the past few years the population has increased by nearly 40,000. Compared with ten years ago, traffic in Ottawa to-day is about ten times as great. I do not say that the plan is perfect, but if that square had not been developed we would

not be able to get through at all with our present traffic. I think those who lived in Ottawa in those days and remember how it was will bear me out. The hon. member for Carleton knows this city quite well and he will remember the corner of Sparks and Rideau street as it was ten years ago and I think he will admit how difficult it would have been to move traffic through there to-day if this had not been done.

Mr. BOUCHER: I would probably repeat what it is called to-day, hell's half acre.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): However, traffic can still move through, and that would have been impossible if it had been left in its former state.

Mr. BRACKEN: I was not asking the minister to justify or excuse the plan; I asked him who was responsible for the plan, and he has not answered.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): The government was. At that time Mr. Greber was called in, when there was some question of where the war memorial in memory of those who lost their lives in the last war should be placed. That memorial was designed by Canadian artists.

Mr. BOUCHER: March brothers.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): I am speaking from memory, and I may be wrong, but I believe the plans for the square were prepared by Mr. Greber. I know he was called in in connection with the location of the new post office. However, the government of the day was responsible for that work. Perhaps mistakes were made, and more property should have been expropriated, perhaps the boulevard should have been extended down Metcalfe street instead of Elgin, but that is a matter of opinion.

Mr. BRACKEN: The minister says that the government was responsible for the plan, so the federal district commission is absolved.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): I think everybody had a share in the preparing of that plan.

Mr. BOUCHER: I think the minister will agree that the federal district commission had no responsibility for that plan.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): I did not say they were responsible.

Mr. BRACKEN: I am glad to have that answer from the minister, because we can have more confidence in the federal district commission when we know that they were not responsible for that monstrosity. The minister referred to the membership of this commis-