

Supply—Privy Council

As to construction programs, the acquisition of property and certain grants to municipalities under agreements to assist them in construction projects are met out of the national capital fund and more recently out of loans obtained from the crown for the acquisition of properties in advance of the time they are used by the commission for works of the commission. The national capital fund was established by vote No. 809 in the estimates of 1947-48. Since that time the sum of \$2,500,000 has been included in the estimates each year to be put into the fund in accordance with the intention as stated by Right Hon. Mr. King at the time the fund was set up.

Last year that amount was included in the estimates but only \$2,083,334 was actually paid into the fund. The reason the full amount was not paid in was that in the payment of moneys into this fund it was questionable whether it could properly be undertaken, in the circumstances, by governor general's warrants. Consequently parliament is being asked this year to revoke this difference of \$416,666 in the supplementary estimate, vote No. 590, together with an additional \$400,000 which is being included to permit the acceleration of the construction program of the commission as an employment measure this year and particularly during the coming winter.

The main estimates, vote No. 317, provide for the eleventh instalment of \$2,500,000 to be paid into the national capital fund. When the new legislation has been passed and the national capital commission has reviewed the program with the government, consideration should be given to deciding what future instalments should be paid into the national capital fund.

Another source of funds for the acquisition of properties by the commission consists of loans made from the crown under the authority of appropriations included in the category of loans, investments and advances in the estimates. Vote 509 in the main estimates this year proposes the granting of authority for the advancing of some \$3 million to the commission for this purpose. These loans are designed to be used for acquiring property to be held by the commission which is not immediately needed by the commission for its projects; and when so used, for example in the creation of parks or the building of parkways or projects of that nature, the cost of the property must be charged to the national capital fund or other account for expenditures and the loans repaid.

With regard to the amounts of the votes requested this year and the nature of the programs for which they provide, questions

were asked in this regard by the hon. member for Ottawa West. The main request, as found in vote 314, is for \$600,000 to supplement the statutory grant of the commission, and this amount compares with some \$307,648 last year. The reason for the increase is not the increase in expenditures of the commission for administration and the maintenance of parks and parkways; rather the chief cause of the increase is that there is not available for these expenditures this year much in the way of rental revenues from properties administered by the commission. As the committee knows, in the past this was an important source of funds for expenditures of the commission, but the accumulation made in earlier years has largely been used up and the revenues expected this year are only about the amount required to meet interest on the loans incurred by the commission to which we feel these rental revenues should be applied. This change in the revenue available for operating expenses accounts for some \$215,000 of the increase in vote 314 over last year.

Of the actual increase in expenditures on operation and maintenance of parks and parkways, the increase is chiefly due to the increase in basic wages for the men working on the grounds maintained by the commission as well as additional areas under the control of the commission, including notably such things as the park at Hog's Back.

It will be noted that the vote for maintenance of government grounds adjoining public buildings is increased by some \$42,000 over last year. The reasons for the increase here are similar to those to which I have already referred, namely the increase in wage rates of seasonal labourers in the area and also the additional amount of government property being looked after by the commission. Among these there are the grounds around the new government buildings in Hull, the post office and the printing bureau.

I should like to say a word now about the construction and property program of the commission. In that connection it is convenient to consider the expenditures from the national capital fund, including those made possible by the supplementary estimate as well as by vote 317. We are budgeting this year for a total expenditure from the national capital fund of some \$4,045,000. This compares with budgeted expenditures from the fund last year of \$3,053,000 and actual expenditures of \$2,722,451.

I am not going into details with regard to the building program. The largest item, however, is the expenditure on the Gatineau parkway for which \$1,400,000 is budgeted