

What follows is an interim report on most items considered by the Committee, with enquiry still proceeding with respect to the National Printing Bureau, therefore interim observations only are mentioned with regard to it.

To date the Committee has held twenty-five meetings and has heard the following witnesses:

- Mr. Watson Sellar, Auditor General of Canada;
- Major General H. A. Young, Deputy Minister, Department of Public Works;
- Mr. E. A. Gardner, Chief Architect, Department of Public Works;
- Mr. J. O. Kemp, Contracts Division, Department of Public Works;
- Mr. D. A. Freeze, Director, Property and Building Management Branch, Department of Public Works;
- Mr. C. W. Watson, Mechanical Engineer, Department of Public Works;
- Mr. Edmond Cloutier, Queen's Printer;
- Mr. Ernest Cormier, Architect and Engineer, Montreal;
- Mr. George A. Boyle, Deputy Postmaster General;
- Mr. H. R. Balls, Director of Financial Returns and Accounting, Policy Division, Department of Finance;
- Mr. John M. Kennedy, Mechanical Engineer, Department of Agriculture.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts met on Wednesday, July 30, 1958, for organization, and in accordance with the expressed desire of the House of Commons, unanimously elected a member of the Opposition to be chairman. This being the first occasion in the history of the Standing Committee that such action has been taken, your Committee now records that the action thus taken is not regarded as in any way limiting or impairing the interrogatory powers of the Committee, but does imply that the Committee's reports will take a form that promotes application of sound financial principles throughout the Public Service.

The House of Commons referred the Public Accounts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1957, together with the Report of the Auditor General thereon, to your Committee for enquiry and report. By reason of the Parliamentary Session being well advanced before the Committee was organized, no exhaustive review was made of either; instead, attention was directed to selected transactions and practices, in particular, the construction of the National Printing Bureau.

The National Printing Bureau

For many years a brick building in the area of Nepean Point, Ottawa, was occupied by the Queen's Printer. Space necessities outgrowing its dimensions, after the war it was decided to erect a new building in Hull, the selection of the site being influenced by recommendations in the Greber Plan for the National Capital. Quoting from the General Report presented to Parliament:

The Printing Bureau, inadequately housed on Nepean Point, requires a new building adapted to its growing needs. In keeping with our proposals, a site has been acquired by the Government in Hull, on Sacred Heart Boulevard.

The plans have been prepared for this new imposing building, the construction of which will commence the gradual rehabilitation of a part of the City of Hull, which is now blighted. The building will be accessible from all sides by direct arteries—Sacred Heart Boulevard, Laurier Avenue, and a new boulevard connecting Laurier, through Reboul and Montclair, to St. Joseph Boulevard. (p. 210, General Report of M. Jacques Greber dated 1950.)

Evidence given to your Committee clearly indicates that regardless of the suitability of the site from the town planning point of view, it was an unfortunate selection: Subterranean waters, flowing near the surface, greatly