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**ABOVE AND BEYOND?: AN EXAMINATION
OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION'S
RESPONSE TO SOCIETAL CHANGE**

BY

Neil A. Rothwell, B.A. (Honours) 1997

**A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of
the requirement for the degree of**

**Master of Arts
Department of Geography**

**Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
December 1, 1999
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submitted by Neil A. Rothwell B.A. (Honours)
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the degree of Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

The National Capital Commission (NCC) constitutes the federal government planning presence within the National Capital Region of Canada. Its close association with the federal, central government, the appointed nature of its directors, and the apparent secretiveness of its policy making process has led to the criticism that it is elitist, aloof and unresponsive to conditions in the 'real' world.

This thesis investigates the validity of this criticism by contextualizing the changing policy stance of the NCC within the dynamics of capitalist urban evolution. It demonstrates that, while the Commission's policy response often appears to have been driven purely by specific national, local and financial considerations, a deeper assessment reveals an underlying conformity to broader societal change. The work also reveals the presence - and significance - of periodic discrepancies between the projected public image of the NCC and its core ideology.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis analyzes the mode of operation of the National Capital Commission (NCC) since its establishment in 1959. More specifically, the analysis probes whether the ideological stance and general policy thrust of the Commission has evolved in parallel with broader Western societal and urban development from the late 1950s to the mid 1990s.

The NCC is a Canadian Crown Corporation created to replace the Federal District Commission. It constitutes the federal planning presence within the National Capital Region (NCR) and, in consequence, is closely associated with the federal government of Canada. The appearance of a close affiliation to centralized political power, combined with the appointed nature of its officials and the apparent secretiveness of its policy making process, has resulted in

criticism being aimed at the Commission. During the course of its existence it has been accused of being aloof, arrogant and generally unresponsive to pressures emanating from conditions within the 'real world' and to changes within the wider Canadian society. In the light of this criticism, this work seeks to determine whether the NCC has been responsive to broader societal change over the course of its existence.

The thesis begins with an examination of theoretical conceptions of capitalist urban development from the late 1950s to the mid 1990s. The changes that are revealed will be used as a backdrop against which changes in the mode of operation of the NCC can be contextualized. It will be shown that the pattern of capitalist urban development can be compartmentalized into three broad eras. This work has termed these eras 'Modernism', 'The Aestheticization of the Urban Experience', and the 'Culture of Consumption'.

Following this review of capitalist urban development, the thesis continues with a brief account of the development of the NCR. This includes an historical assessment of the social and cultural developments that have taken place. This has been included to more fully explain the social and national context within which the NCC operates. The inclusion is important because it is the local and national circumstances that often provide the acknowledged and overt

justification for a particular policy direction, while the broader underlying forces remain unrecognized or ignored. Therefore, to fully understand the NCC's policies, an awareness of the local and national context is necessary.

This is followed by an appraisal of the mandate and organizational make-up of the NCC. This provides for a fuller understanding of the evolving mode of operation of the Commission by setting it against the organization's basic *raison d'etre*. Moreover, a knowledge of the NCC's organizational make-up is required in order to fully discern its approach to policy enactment.

The thesis then moves on to analyze the evolving mode of operation of the Commission. Throughout this section, the broad evolution of capitalist urban development explicated in chapter two is used as a framework for evaluating whether the NCC was responsive to this wider societal development. The analysis is carried out by examining the Annual Reports (ARs) produced by the Commission during the course of its existence. More specifically, a discourse analysis of statements in the Reports is undertaken in order to reveal intentions and strategies that were not always made apparent by the more accessible and overt message. This technique of deconstruction is particularly useful in revealing how broader societal change often gave impetus to a particular policy

direction. The presence of these deeper underlying forces is often masked by the overt message, which usually attributes a particular policy direction to more specific local and national circumstances. Moreover, as the analysis progressed, the deconstruction of the texts of the ARs suggested a certain separation between the superficial imaging of the NCC's stance on a particular policy initiative and the Commission's underlying, core ideology.

To supplement the findings of the discourse analysis, a series of interviews with past and present NCC personnel were conducted. These interviews were utilized to more fully explore certain actions of, and to reveal the presence of underlying objectives of, the NCC over the course of the study period.

In order to make this analysis more manageable, and to focus and direct the investigation, three themes were identified and explored. They comprised the evolution of the economic environment, the progression of the NCC's relationship with other organizations within the NCR, and the Commission's changing attitude towards aesthetically sensitive redevelopment.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL CONCEPTIONS OF CAPITALIST URBAN EVOLUTION

To set the evolving mission of the National Capital Commission (NCC) within a broader conception of urban societal development during the period of its existence, this thesis will first examine the course of societal change as the context of the actions and intentions of the Commission.

Much academic work over the last 20 years has concerned the development of generic theorizations of capitalist urban development since the Second World War (Harvey, 1996, 1989a, 1989b, 1985; Knox, 1993; Ley, 1996, 1988, 1983; Zukin, 1990, 1985). While the multiple urban social dynamics revealed and explained by this research are complex and far-reaching this thesis contends that they can be compartmentalized into three broad, sequential phases. These three phases will be termed

'Modernism', the 'Aestheticization of the Urban Experience', and the 'Culture of Consumption'. Modernism is an accepted term for an era represented by a particular set of social values and used particularly by Harvey (1996, 1989a). The Aestheticization of the Urban Experience and the Culture of Consumption are terms that have been developed from expressions found in the literature on urban Postmodernism. The Aestheticization of the Urban Experience is developed from the work of Knox (1993) and Ley (1996), while the Culture of Consumption is taken from a term found in Featherstone (1990).

While much of the academic literature conflates the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience and the Culture of Consumption under the rubric of 'Postmodernism', this work will contend that they represent different dynamics. As will be seen, the full importance of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience appears to remain unrecognized by the major writers on urban geography. There are, however, obvious and undeniable connections between the two, with the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience representing a broad change in understanding of the urban milieu - an orientation towards the sensuous and lived experience - which proved to be readily commercially exploitable in the era of the Culture of Consumption, as is shown below.

It is also important to point out that the three eras are

created by, and represent, temporal patterns of social relationships. In other words, they are developed from social changes occurring within society and 'grow out' of the general flow of events. They are not categories imposed 'from above'.

Each of these phases impacted the morphological and spatial structure of the capitalist city. The cityscape, in consequence, is significant as a text that reflects the impact of these economic, social, cultural and political dynamics at particular times, to reveal the relationships between the social and spatial dimensions of urbanization (Knox, 1993). As a result, the built structures and spatial patterning of the city reflects, and can reveal, these broad societal changes.

This thesis will now describe and explain the characteristics of the eras defined as Modernism, the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience, and the Culture of Consumption. While the societal change represented by these eras suffused all of the urban milieu during the study period, it is the planning aspects that will be emphasized here. Planning acts as the conduit and mechanism through which societal change becomes reflected in the morphological patterning of the city. Moreover, the NCC is fundamentally a planning body and therefore the evolving methodology of

general urban planning will be a central, though not sole, concern of this chapter.

2.1 MODERNISM

Modernism represents a pattern of capitalist societal organization that developed in the early years of the 20th century. Modernism was defined by a society that tended to follow technocratic and business-like principles of authoritarianism, discipline, rationality and efficiency. As will be seen, so powerful was this dynamic that these business principles infused the public sphere, particularly in the realm of urban planning and development. Civic leaders usually came from, or had close ties to, the business world (Ley, 1996). This alliance and commingling of public and private power created a social climate in which the 'ordinary' person was distanced from policy decisions. Indeed, the 'ordinary' person was apparently so invisible that public policies enacted during this era, which served vested business interests but were detrimental to large segments of the general population, could still be promoted as benefitting society as a whole. In Canada, the public sphere spoke with one voice that promoted a policy of uncritical growth boosterism (Ley, 1996).

These social and political dynamics inevitably manifested themselves in the urban landscape. Both the morphological structure and spatial planning of cities followed the tenets of cold efficient rationality (Ley, 1996). The Modernist city was characterized by the development of high-rise buildings, urban freeways, and enormous growth of suburban housing tracts all of which, while directly benefitting the development industry, also served wider business interests. These elements of the Modernist city are still very evident in many urban centres today.

David Harvey (1985, 1989b) provides an explanation for the spatial patterning of the Modernist city by conceptualizing it as a product of post-Second World War urban reconstruction that was spearheaded by state intervention in macro-economic policy. Concentrating on the American urban situation, Harvey contends that it was the switch to Keynesian strategies of fiscal and monetary management that consolidated a turn towards large-scale, state-sponsored infrastructural development. Formulated during the depression of the 1930s to counteract what was perceived as an 'underconsumption' problem, the policy was continued after the Second World War. The Modernist city was shaped as a consumption artifact and its social, economic and political life organized around the

theme of state-backed, debt-financed consumption (Harvey, 1985).

The pursuance of these policies had both temporal and spatial ramifications. Surplus capital and labour power were switched into the production of physical and social infrastructures to maintain economic activity. This, in turn, fostered the spatial spread of cities during the immediate post-war period by encouraging large-scale, debt-financed home ownership. The result was the rapid spread of suburban developments. Suburbanisation, and the widespread car ownership and road construction that it necessitated, fuelled consumption of the products of the oil, auto, rubber and construction industries. Rapid and weakly controlled suburbanisation was, for the most part, privately developed but heavily subsidized by government-backed housing finance and direct public investment in highway construction and other infrastructures. For Harvey, suburbanisation was essentially a middle-class dynamic - open only to those who could afford the mortgage repayments and the necessary car ownership.

This powerful process of spatial reorganization of consumer landscapes left behind growing pockets of abandonment and deprivation, for the most part concentrated in inner city neighbourhoods (Harvey, 1985) with working-class populations. In many cases the deterioration of the inner-cities consequent

on the flight outwards of both jobs and people provided a powerful and government-subsidized opportunity for urban renewal through massive clearance and reconstruction of older city centres (Harvey, 1989b).

Peter Hall (1988) examines this inner-city manifestation of Modernism at some length. By conceptualizing the post-war Modernist reconstruction planning of many inner-cities as the legacy of the centralist planner Le Corbusier, Hall is able to document the failings of a planning process in which middle-class professional planners, acting as agents of the 'establishment' and beholden to the business community, organized the rehousing of the working-class population displaced by the clearance of slum areas.

Hall (1988) reveals nuances of difference between Great Britain and the U.S. in this regard. In Britain the major impetus for urban redevelopment came from the need to address war-time bomb damage. This damage enhanced an ideological environment in which there was "...an extraordinary sense that Britain must be rebuilt, that the slums must be swept away" (Hall, 1988; 219). In this atmosphere of societal catharsis the introduction of massive public involvement in the reconstruction process - through direct government spending - found a ready acceptance amongst the general population.

The clearance of the slums produced the problem of how to re-house a displaced population that, in general, could only afford modest rents for accommodation. The solution was the construction of massive public housing projects in inner-city locations. Hall engages the question of why, for the most part, public housing projects, designed for working-class occupation, were concentrated in inner-city locations as opposed to suburban or 'New Town' locations. He concludes that this was the result of pressure from many disparate groups. These included architects "...lambasting the early New Towns for their lack of urbanity" (Hall, 1988; 219); a farm lobby insisting "...on trying to save every possible last acre for agriculture" (Hall, 1988; 222); and sociologists lamenting the destruction of what they saw as a uniquely rich pattern of working-class folk life (Hall, 1988). As a result the government wanted urban containment. This was a signal for developers to "...build dense and build high" (Hall, 1988; 223). In all too many cases the results were large-scale, high-rise housing development projects in which the architecture "...was uninspired or non-existent, and where tenants found themselves uprooted into hurriedly constructed system-built flats lacking amenities, environment, community; lacking, in fact, almost anything except a roof and four walls" (Hall, 1988; 225). Hall concludes that this was the

inevitable result of design solutions laid down by people who would never live in these developments and who paid scant regard to the preferences, ways of life, or plain idiosyncrasies of the people forced to live there. With its rational, efficient, technocratic and authoritative approach, augmented by the lack of regard for, and input from, the 'ordinary' people impacted by these policies, this era of post-war British public housing provision powerfully illustrates the dynamics of Modernism.

In the U.S. there were the same general societal dynamics, but with differences emanating essentially from a lack of war-time bomb damage and a greater, though not total, reliance on private business initiatives in clearing the inner-city slums and rehousing the displaced population. The U.S. situation also had a more powerful racial dimension.

In 1937, during the depression, congress had passed a landmark public housing measure, the Wagner Act. This established Public Housing as a temporary expedient solely for the 'deserving poor'. These people were defined as the newly unemployed, who could be expected to buy their own house as soon as the economy improved (Hall, 1988). This definition excluded the very poor, predominantly black, underclass. The means to discriminate between the deserving poor and the rest of the poor lay in the finances of the Act: federal funds

would pay for land acquisition and development but not for running costs. Running costs had to be met from the rental income. At the end of the 1940s, the crush of the very poor became so intolerable that they were admitted to public housing developments. Unfortunately, the financing arrangements remained unchanged, with the inevitable result that the rental money needed for proper maintenance of the properties was insufficient. A consequential, long-term deterioration of the fabric of the buildings ensued (Hall, 1988).

When private business initiatives were used to address the problems of urban slums other dilemmas arose. In many cases private developers were keen to clear blighted areas but less keen to provide the replacement housing. They preferred instead to encourage commercial development (with a greater potential for return on investment), particularly on prime sites adjacent to the Central Business District of cities. In many cases: "The result was the demolition of major - and increasingly Black - slum areas to build downtown offices..." (Hall, 1988; 231). This put even greater pressure on the scant amount of public housing available.

The pattern in city after city fits the Modernist mould. The argument for urban renewal came predominantly from organized business, which either infiltrated and occupied

local government posts or formed coalitions to pressurize recalcitrant governments to effect policies beneficial to them. While Hall (1988; 232) finds it astonishing that business coalitions were so successful at pushing through policies that were clearly against the interest of the majority of voters, this activity is clearly definitive of the dynamics of Modernism. It defined a conservative and rationalistic society, in which a business orientation was promoted as a way forward for a society keen to progress from the stagnation of the Depression and the horrors of global conflict.

Barker et al. (1973) give a Canadian perspective to housing production in the era of Modernism. Taking a similar Marxist stance to Harvey, they view the Canadian state housing policies during this period as the utilization of "housing production as a tool for adjusting the economy" (Barker et al., 1973; 92). Central to this policy was the creation, in 1946, of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

The CMHC is Canada's administrative agency in housing at the federal level. It is a Crown Corporation which oversees the production of housing within Canada and is granted authority to do business with the provinces, municipalities, financial institutions, builders, private borrowers and

tenants, in an attempt to carry out federal policy enacted under the National Housing Act (NHA) (Barker et al., 1973).

In the somewhat disrupted social milieu that immediately followed the Second World War, the CMHC played a direct role in the creation of housing through both new construction and the conversion of wartime buildings to housing. In short order, however, the CMHC withdrew from direct intervention in construction and development to what was viewed as a more "'appropriate' peacetime state role as the financial backup to the [private] development industry....The federal government...[closed down]...its housing production apparatus in 1947 in favour of contracting out to private developers" (Barker et al., 1973; 107).

Barker et al. (1973) are able to document the contradictions and shortcomings of the relationship between the CMHC and private developers within Canadian cities during the Modernist era. The post-war economic boom had produced an enlarged white-collar stratum of the workforce, and the primary thrust of CMHC policies up to the mid-1960s had been aimed at enabling this stratum to become house owners. Moreover, these developments were predominantly aimed at suburban developments where land was both cheap and available and the aspirations of buyers seeking to escape the blighted and often polluted city centres could be met. These policies

were given particular impetus in 1957 when, in response to an economic recession, the federal government introduced direct housing loans on a large scale. In other words, they were using housing policy as a "Keynesian tool to prime the economy" (Barker et al., 1973; 109). It also had the effect of greatly increasing the CMHC's role as a banker.

So it was Canadian government involvement that, in large measure, facilitated the suburban developments on the fringe of Canadian cities that is so indicative of Modernism. However, throughout the 1960s real physical limits began to impinge on suburban sprawl. These limits were represented by skyrocketing land and land-servicing prices and prohibitive commuting costs to the urban centre as the suburban fringe grew ever outwards. The planning response, in many cases, was city-centre, residential, high-rise development that, crucially, was aimed at the white-collar sector (Barker et al, 1973).

During the 1960s the provision of low-cost, public housing was a secondary consideration for the federal government. Where low-cost housing developments were implemented, however, they tended to be of a minimum standard and provided a bare minimum of housing for the occupants. Barker et al. (1973) contend that the policy of minimal standards for public housing was effected not only with

parsimonious economic considerations in mind, but that it also reflected the intimate relationship between government and private developers. It was a policy designed to make it clear that these public housing developments were not competing with private enterprise, which was aimed at producing a more attractive housing product targeted at those who could afford to buy it. Despite public utterances to the contrary, it seems that federal government policies were aimed more at facilitating private business success than providing adequate housing for all. The inevitable result was the construction, in specific, delineated areas, of an urban landscape that was architecturally austere and socially alienating (Barker et al., 1973).

The situation was exacerbated during the 1960s when inflationary pressure, itself partly the result of an increased number of families seeking a home, made lending institutions hold back on financing fixed-rate - and therefore inflation proof - mortgages. This situation forced the federal government to take further steps to ensure the supply of low-cost housing.

In 1964 the NHA was amended to provide for federal loans to the provinces or their designates for the purpose of building or acquiring housing for the use of lower income people (Adamson, 1968). However, although this represented an

increase in public money aimed at lower income housing provision, as before, the actual developments would be undertaken by private companies seeking to maximize profits. Barker et al. (1973) suggest that this state nurturing of private business interest in public housing provision, in an era of burgeoning demand, actually supported a policy of urban renewal through the demolition and clearance of pre-existing city blocks and the building of high-rise apartments. Simply put, these urban renewal schemes were a much more profitable way to create low-cost housing. Indeed, for Barker et al (1973) the density of high-rise apartments provided a spatial reflection and representation of capitalist concentration.

While Barker et al's Marxist stance colour their analysis, the commingling of public policy initiatives and private business involvement that is revealed, provides a vivid example of the dynamics of Modernism in the Canadian context. Government and private business were moving in lockstep, and producing, albeit unintentionally, an alienating urban environment for many working-class residents of Canadian cities.

Krier (1987) provides another perspective on the Modernist urban planning of this period. He sees the central problem of Modernist urban planning as its being effected mainly through the creation of mono-functional zones within

the city. In consequence, the circulation of people between zones by way of transportation arteries became the central preoccupation of the planner. For Krier this produced a city that was both environmentally unsound and had a 'symbolic poverty' (Krier, 1987; 14).

Monofunctional zoning is very indicative of the Modernist era. Marcuse (1980) argues that its principal function was to safeguard property values by excluding undesirable land-uses and undesirable neighbours. It was, therefore, very desirable for the development industry, keen to safeguard the value of its properties in order to maximize the return on investment. This is yet another example of how, in the Modernist era, planning practice served and benefited the business community.

On a more theoretical level, Hall (1988) investigates the authoritarian and technocratic slant of urban planning during the 1950s. He is able to reveal two interacting dynamics. The first was the post-war financial and social upheaval within Western society. The financial aspect was characterised by an economic resurgence, while the social revolution was characterised by the baby boom. This produced a dramatic need for increased investment in both commercial (offices and factories) and institutional (maternity wards, child care clinics, schools etc.) infrastructure. The second dynamic manifested itself in the academic side of planning.

To simplify a complicated transition, essentially logical positivism and systems analysis were incorporated into general urban planning methodology. Planning practice "...changed from a kind of craft, based on personal knowledge of a rudimentary collection of concepts about the city, into an apparently scientific activity in which vast amounts of precise information were garnered and processed in such a way that the planner could devise very sensitive systems of guidance and control....Cities and regions were viewed as complex systems...while planning was seen as a continuous process of control and monitoring of these systems" (Hall, 1988; 327).

So, by the 1960s, planning had developed a quasi-scientific and rational underpinning that developed out of, and reflected, the tenor of the times. Once established, it acted to reinforce and support those very dynamics. In many ways this defines the very nature and characteristics of Modernism. This situation would not continue unchallenged, however.

There are many examples of Modernist inspired development within the National Capital Region. These include the massive business office development of Centretown, that reached a peak of intensity in the mid 1960s, immediately south of the parliamentary precinct; the building of the multi-laned

Queensway road, also in the mid 1960s; and the development of federal office nodes such as Tunney's Pasture and Confederation Heights in the early 1960s.

2.2 THE AESTHETICIZATION OF THE URBAN EXPERIENCE

The uncritical promotion of rationality and private business efficiency in the Modernist city eventually provoked widespread protest during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Ley (1996) contends that this reaction developed from the urban movements of the 1960s that were protesting not only the rationality and pro-business orientation of the Modernist city living experience, but also the social injustice made manifest by the decline of the inner cities and the failure of rational, top-down planning practice to satisfactorily address these injustices. The change was spearheaded by urban reformers who had a more humanistic view and a progressive agenda that would promote a city of human scale, where the population would find urban government more accessible through participatory programs, where the ideology of 'ordinary people' would guide transportation and housing policy, favouring public solutions (transit, social housing) over private ones (the private car, slum housing), and where design

guidelines and generous park and landscaping policy would enhance the quality of the built environment (Ley, 1996).

The bearers of this new liberal ideology were those citizens who saw the benefits of an expanded welfare state. They were the educated, middle-class professionals primarily under 40 years of age, and disproportionately employed in the public or non-profit sectors as teachers, professors, social workers, architects or lawyers (Ley, 1996). These were the very positions that had, ironically, burgeoned in the state-promoted consumption of the Modernist era. These 'new' professionals increasingly ran for local office, and where successful, broke the pro-business monopoly of many urban public bodies.

Ley (1996) is able to supply an example of this political evolution in the Canadian Context. During 1968, two political parties were formed in the municipal borough of the City of Vancouver as a result of some major land-use controversies within the city concerning urban renewal and freeway development. Dissatisfaction with the one-dimensional, pro-growth, pro-development thinking of the incumbent Non-Partisan Association appeared to provide the specific impetus for the formation of the two new parties. One of these was a coalition of middle-class professionals in their mid-twenties to mid-forties called The Electors Action Movement (TEAM); and

the other a coalition of union, tenant and anti-poverty groups, the left-wing Committee of Progressive Electors (COPE). These three parties contested the 1972 municipal election with TEAM emerging victorious. Crucially, they won on a platform not promising to lower taxes or provide economic growth but instead promising a city people could live in and enjoy (Ley, 1996).

This illustrates that the struggles of the late 1960s were not simply aimed at the redirection of urban development away from the pattern of social relationships represented by Modernism. While the entry of TEAM indicated a protest against the urban living experience produced by Modernistic social practices, the presence of COPE suggests that there was also a protest against perceived social and economic injustice. There was, therefore, an attempt to open the public sphere for the entry of marginalised publics, including the counter-culture, visible minorities, tenants and, not least, middle-class professionals, men and women, particularly those employed by the state (Ley, 1996). The basis for political legitimacy subtly shifted away from managing class relations towards distributive justice.

As part of this broader change a new agenda for urbane, central-city living was being articulated (Ley, 1996). These 'new' professionals were concerned to build a life-style rich

in symbolic meaning as a counterpoint to the blandness and rationality of the Modernist milieu. Generally, financial considerations of return on investment were not priorities for this group. A new social dynamic was set in motion in which urban space became increasingly oriented to experience and the sensuous. More and more the city became viewed and appreciated as an aesthetic resource, for living, as opposed to a place to work and make money.

For Ley (1996) the social dynamic that both strongly reflected and grew from this new appreciation of the urban milieu was gentrification. Gentrification can be defined as the movement of middle-class people into renovated older property that previously, but no longer, had a working-class or industrial character. Ley is able to demonstrate that, in the Canadian context, gentrifiers were the middle-classes predominantly employed in the public sector. For Ley, gentrification in Canadian cities during the early 1970s was an expression of critical cultural politics, a rejection of the suburbs and their perceived cultural conformity in favour of the more permissive opportunities of the central city. For this group an inner-city home was much more than a functional convenience, it was an integral part of their identity formation.

There are examples of gentrification in the local Ottawa-Hull area. Ley (1996) quotes the Sandy Hill area as being the first area to undergo gentrification in the city. This area experienced considerable social upgrading in early 1970s.

The change from Modernism to the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience was not confined to Canada. While not conceptualizing it as such, Hall (1988) animates the transition through changes in planning practice in Europe and America. Hall claims that many planning initiatives undertaken during this period constituted an ideological extension of what he terms the anarchist planning movement. The anarchist strain of planning arose in the late 1800s, in both Europe and America, as a response to the appalling living conditions suffered by many working-class residents of inner cities at this time. The "...vision of these anarchist pioneers was not merely of an alternative built form, but of an alternative society, neither capitalistic nor bureaucratic-socialistic: a society based on voluntary co-operation among men and women, working and living in small self-governing commonwealths" (Hall, 1988; 3).

The planning manifestation of the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience expressed itself in the demand that local communities should have a greater say in the shaping - and especially the reshaping - of their own

neighbourhoods. This demand "...expressed itself forcibly in the reformulation of American urban renewal policy after 1964, and in some epic conflicts over urban reconstruction projects in the hearts of European cities in the late 1960s and early 1970s" (Hall, 1988; 262). In Britain the era was further characterised by the Community Design approach to planning, which involved local community organization to effect and control redevelopment or rehabilitation of their own neighbourhood.

One of the spearheads of the challenge to Modernism was Jane Jacobs (1962), who decried the results of the rational, top-down, technocratic planning process. Amongst other things, Jacobs appealed for a return to the density and mixed land uses of the traditional unplanned city, arguing that while appearing chaotic, the traditional city provided its inhabitants with a more pleasing and satisfying living experience.

So, in terms of planning, the change from Modernism to the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience can be conceptualized as a change from top-down planning to a more bottom-up planning process, in which local concerns and ideas were taken into account. A crucial part of this accommodation of local concerns involved the creation (or re-creation) of aesthetically pleasing urban neighbourhoods with the

concomitant enhancement of a sensually pleasing living experience for the actual inhabitants. This is important because it was this desire for aesthetic satisfaction, created out of, and so successful in opposing, Modernist social practices, that proved to be a very commercially exploitable social dynamic. This was true for both urban residents and visitors alike, and it was this dynamic, commingling with a protest against 'big' government intrusion in society at large, and the perceived high level of taxation that this necessitated, that spearheaded the change from the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience to the era of the Culture of Consumption from the mid 1970s onwards.

2.3 THE CULTURE OF CONSUMPTION

The liberal slant of the early opposition to modernism, with the associated political acceptance of pluralism within the urban social milieu, produced a huge proliferation of different tastes, practices, enjoyments and needs. These different patterns of consumption became embedded in a variety of lifestyles and created a socio-cultural environment in which emphasis was not so much on ownership and consumption per se but on the possession of particular combinations of things and the style of consumption (Knox, 1993). Social

distinctions, which during the Modernist period could be marked by the ownership of particular kinds of consumer goods, now had to be established via the symbolism of 'aestheticized' commodities (Knox, 1993).

Harvey (1989b) emphasizes how this desire for aestheticized commodities was both incorporated into the mechanism of capital accumulation and was reflected in the landscape of the city. He does not, however, address the issue of how these aestheticized commodities acquired a capital value. Harvey contends that by exploring the realms of differentiated tastes and aesthetic preferences, architects and urban designers re-emphasized a powerful aspect of capital accumulation: the production and consumption of 'symbolic capital'. Taken from the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984), symbolic capital can be defined as the collection of luxury goods attesting to the taste and distinction of the owner. The lifestyle and possessions (including property) of the protestors of Modernity were reincorporated within the broader mechanism of capital accumulation. The dynamics of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience were overtaken by concerns for financial return on investment and considerations of personal status enhancement, albeit in the new setting of the aesthetic city.

The connection between inner-city revitalization and capitalist consumption practices has been extensively analysed by Sharon Zukin (1990; 1985). By conceptualizing the consumption activity associated with the revitalization of urban areas as the utilization of 'cultural capital', Zukin demonstrates how this cultural capital plays a real, material role in moving financial capital through both economic and cultural circuits. It is integrally involved in real investment and production and creates real economic value. Zukin (1990) contends that consumption of this cultural capital cannot be relegated to either a passive or a residual role in any analysis of the market economy.

In the public sphere, cultural capital was drawn more and more deeply into the revenue-generating policies of cities. Consumption promotion strategies laid the base for a new round of economic development predicated particularly on the provision of services for leisure and tourism activities, and, further, they also led to new and pre-existing leisure activities becoming increasingly commodified within the evolving culture of consumption (Featherstone, 1990).

The economic importance of this service provision was augmented by a continuing shift in business practice which acted to reduce the tax base of many cities. Harvey (1989b) notes that this had begun much earlier, but in the 1970s a

combination of technological advancement and a changing business climate acted to speed this transformation. Within cities this change manifested itself in business centralization and concentration. With respect to the construction industry, this development changed the specific motivation and the scale of investment in the built environment. Of particular importance were the actions of development companies. The involvement of conglomerate corporations and large financial institutions made it possible to put together large-scale, highly visible building projects (Knox, 1993).

In terms of the state, the social dynamics represented by the Culture of Consumption promoted a decline of the welfare state and a shift towards entrepreneurialism in urban governance. Increasingly, politicians were elected who had an "ideological stance based on the belief that the welfare state had not only generated unreasonably high levels of taxation, a bloated class of 'unproductive' government workers and disincentives for 'ordinary' people to work and save, but also that it may have favoured 'soft' attitudes toward problem groups in society" (Knox, 1993; 10). This new urban political culture had at its centre the notion of public-private partnership, in which public resources and legal powers were

joined with private interests in order to secure external funding or investment (Harvey, 1989a; Hall, 1988).

This change in societal attitude both ushered in, and further grew from, the election of right-wing, conservative oriented governments in many Western countries during the late 1970s and early 1980s. These included the Reagan Republican administration in the US, the Thatcher Conservative government in the UK, and the Mulroney Conservative Party in Canada. While subtle differences in approach persisted, all these administrations lauded a reduction of central government 'intrusion' in society, the desirability of lower personal and corporate taxation, encouragement of private business activity, and the reorientation of public and governmental organizations to a more private business mode of operation.

In terms of planning, this pervasive change in capitalist political culture fostered a speculative and piecemeal approach to the management of cities. Greater attention was given to specific projects in particular locations rather than to city-wide services or investments (Knox, 1993). Spectacular local projects such as downtown shopping malls, festival market places, new stadia, theme parks, and conference centres were seen as having the greatest capacity to enhance property values and generate retail turnover and employment growth. When successful, they were perceived to

benefit the whole city (Fainstein, 1991) and even in the face of poor economic returns, they tended to be regarded as a kind of 'loss leader' that had the potential to bolster the image of the city and pull in other forms of development (Featherstone, 1991).

Urban planning authorities, under pressure from right-wing central governments, were greatly affected by these changes in business and political organization. There was a diminution of any overall picture of 'public good'. Planning practices became increasingly geared to the needs of producers and wants of consumers and less concerned with overarching notions of rationality or criteria of public good (Knox, 1993). These changes in planning practice largely manifested themselves in changes in land-use zoning. The Modernist penchant for single purpose zoning was now seen as wasteful, monotonous and overly rigid. Mixed-use zoning, critical for developers wanting to produce large set-piece projects, was increasingly seen as beneficial to the city (Knox, 1993). The increase in mixed-use zoning allowed developers of specific neighbourhoods within the city maximum freedom to pursue individual development projects. In other words, fragments of the city were, and continue to be, regulated by special district or contextual zoning. Historic Preservation Controls, TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) off of

historic structures, and even the dictates of an EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) are examples of regulations that pay attention to the "artful fragment" but say nothing about the city as a whole (Boyer, 1987; 5).

Beauregard (1989) contends that what developed was a peculiar form of nonplanning in which planners, driven by the prevailing business and political climate, participated in individual projects, often attempting to temper the most egregious negative externalities, while failing to place those projects in any broader framework of urban development.

Harvey (1989b) introduces a particular, and important, manifestation of the planned provision of amenities to attract leisure spending, and therefore revenue, in the new setting of the aestheticized city. This is the concept of the urban 'spectacle'. The urban spectacle also clearly demonstrates how urban aesthetic sensibilities, the development of which defined the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience, were commercially exploited in the era of the Culture of Consumption.

Using the development of Baltimore's Harbour Place as the originating example, Harvey contends that the sense of spectacle was first conceived to protect the vitality of Baltimore's downtown area and the viability of investment already made there in the face of the urban riots sparked by

the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968. From this beginning of a one-off, temporary event the promotion of the urban spectacle proceeded through an escalating series of staged festivals and events. Harvey is also able to make the link between this change in socioeconomic dynamics and alterations in urban morphology. Urban spectacle events required a wholly different architecture from the austere Modernism of the downtown renewal that had dominated Baltimore in the 1960s. "An architecture of spectacle, with its sense of surface glitter and transitory participatory pleasure, of display and ephemerality, of *jouissance*, became essential to the success of a project of this sort" (Harvey, 1989b; 91). The result was the construction of Harbour Place. This was a site of more or less permanent spectacle designed to attract leisure spending and therefore to generate profitable economic activity.

The Baltimore Harbour project, and other similar inner-city developments, thus involved the deliberate creation of the city-as-stage. Like theatre it resembles real life, but it is not urban life as it was ever actually lived. It represents an almost fantasy aspect of the urban experience: "...sanitised for your protection (as the phrase goes), wholesome, undangerous...[urban spectacle areas]...manage to

look like a Disney movie lot of an imagined urban America, but they happen incongruously to be real" (Hall, 1988; 350-351).

The financial success of the Baltimore harbour project spawned many imitators throughout North America and Western Europe. Imaging a city through the organization of spectacular urban spaces became the means to attract capital and people (of the right sort) in a period of intensified inter-urban competition and urban entrepreneurialism (Harvey, 1989b).

While Harvey deals exclusively with American examples of urban spectacles, there are Canadian examples. In this regard, Ley (1996) introduces the term 'festival market'. Festival markets incorporate a mix of shopping, leisure and entertainment, for the most part, in renovated older structures in urban centres. Ley (1996) cites the example of Granville Island in Vancouver as an extraordinarily successful festival market development. Developed creatively by the CMHC out of an abandoned industrial area, the mix of heritage, craft production, local produce, arts and entertainment secured sales of \$26 million in 1988. This represented a return of \$13,000 per sq. metre of commercial floor space (Ley, 1996).

Ley (1996) also supplies many examples that indicate that Canada followed a more general pattern of commercial

exploitation of aestheticized goods and services. Citing the *embourgeoisement* of Fourth Avenue in Kitsilano, Vancouver, Ley (1996) is able to show that local commercial enterprises were predominantly those that serviced a lower middle-class client base in 1968 with the emphasis on personal services, groceries and household goods. Twenty years later, however, restaurants and clothing stores, emphasising specialised cuisine and unique fashion items, were the leading categories of commercial establishments. Restaurants or cafes had more than tripled in number during this period. Moreover, recreational, leisure and travel specialists had grown from seven outlets in 1968 to 48 in 1988.

The Byward Market represents an example of a successful festival market place within the National Capital Region. Its rise from a seedy, working-class area in the 1960s to a commercially successful area of sophisticated restaurants, craft stalls, boutiques and art galleries by the mid 1980s has been extensively analysed by Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990).

It must be pointed out that while Knox, Harvey and Ley successfully describe and analyse the commercial exploitation of aestheticized commodities throughout the 1970s and 1980s, none appears to adequately explain why these commodities had become so desirable. In jumping from the dominance of social practices represented by Modernism to those represented by the

Culture of Consumption, the presence, and importance, of the intermediary era - the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience - is ignored. The change in sensibilities represented by this era, specifically the initial fomenting of a desire for sensually pleasing objects and experiences, was crucial to the development of the Culture of Consumption.

As has been seen, the era of the Culture of Consumption encompasses many different strands of urban development and activity. A central theme remains, however, the commercial exploitation of aestheticized commodities, architecture and space within the urban setting. The attractiveness of aestheticized objects and experiences had been created during the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience. The perception of the need to exploit these items was sharpened by many interacting factors. First, there was the dramatic decline of the commercial manufacturing base of many Western cities during the late 1970s and 1980s. Second, there was the swing towards a more right-wing political agenda represented, operationalized and further encouraged by the election of more conservative oriented central administrations. Third, the result of this political and business reorientation was a more competitive society with a sharper distinction between commercial 'winners' and 'losers'. This acted to increase the desirability of advertising and displaying the trappings of

success. This advertising and display was often most easily achieved through the consumption of aestheticized commodities and services.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION: HISTORY, LOCATION AND NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Having reviewed the broad evolution of urban dynamics this thesis will now examine the more specific local and national context within which the National Capital Commission (NCC) operates. This is necessary because the embracing of a particular policy direction was usually attributed - in both the Annual Reports (ARs) and the interviews - to specific local or national circumstances. The broader societal change that may have contributed to those local and national conditions remained unspoken or unrecognized.

To more fully analyze the local and national considerations, a brief history of the National Capital Region (NCR) will be traced. Particular emphasis will be placed on the national significance that capital status bestows on the

area, and the importance of the NCR's border location between the provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

The colonial activity of Britain and France had produced the territorial pattern of Anglophone-dominated Upper Canada and Francophone-dominated Lower Canada before there was any permanent settlement in the present-day Ottawa-Hull area. The territory of Upper and Lower Canada conformed to a portion of the present day territory of Ontario and Quebec, respectively, and the border between the two was represented by the Ottawa River.

The first local permanent settlement occurred on the north shore of the Ottawa River, in the Outaouais area. British influence had been exerted over the whole of present day Ontario and southern Quebec following their victory at the Plains of Abraham. In the late 1700s, faced with a perceived threat from the newly independent America, Britain initiated and promoted a system known as the 'leaders-and-associates' system to encourage settlement in hitherto unoccupied land. This policy was intended to give rise to communities with an appropriate hierarchy in the British style and whose presence, it was expected, would discourage thoughts of northern expansion by the United States (Gaffield, 1997).

In the Ottawa-Hull area, it was an American, Philemon Wright, who first moved to take advantage of this situation.

Wright, his family and some others, arrived from Massachusetts in 1800 with the intention of becoming 'utopian farmers'. They were drawn by the availability of land that, from their own perspective, was theirs for the taking (Gaffield, 1997). Wright's initial settlement would eventually develop into the city of Hull, in what was to become the Quebec portion of the NCR.

However, settlement under the 'leader-and-associate' system was slow and disappointing in the Outaouais area. A particular problem was the lack of seasonal agricultural labourers. While occupied on farms in summer, in the winter these labourers were effectively idle. It was perceived by Wright and other settler families that logging could provide a winter occupation for these people and would, in consequence, increase the attractiveness of the area as a place to settle. Since logging could complement farming, wood appeared to be a promising export commodity (Gaffield, 1997).

While some logging existed in the local area prior to 1806, it was developments in Europe that gave impetus to the local forest economy. In 1806, Napoleon issued the Berlin Decree denying Britain her traditional access to Baltic timber. In light of the decree, Britain made a far greater commitment to ensuring a supply of timber from her colonies. The increased demand that ensued initiated a reorientation of

the local economy from one based on agriculture to one based on wood. The timber trade came to permeate all aspects of life in the Outaouais during the early 1800s (Gaffield, 1997) and greatly influenced its developing social organization, particularly with respect to the effects of male numerical domination and frequent seasonal absences from home for all the participants.

Prior to the war of 1812 most farmer-settlers were on the north bank of the Ottawa River and represented satellites of Wright's initial settlement. Only three families are recorded on the south shore until 1815 (Taylor, 1986). At this time, the British military practice of promoting the settlement of virgin land with appropriate people to protect Upper Canada from the 'predatory' Americans was accelerated in the aftermath of the war of 1812. By the mid 1820s this practice had produced a settlement pattern of some 2,000 independent farmers and gentry on the land south of the Ottawa River (Taylor, 1986).

In the early 1820s, the Governor in Chief of British North America, Lord Dalhousie, recognized the present day Ottawa's potential and acquired for the Crown vast expanses of land between the Rideau River and Victoria Island, including the site on which the Parliament buildings now stand (NCC, 1998), on the south shore of the Ottawa River. However, it

was the decision to construct a canal from Kingston, on Lake Ontario, to the Ottawa River, at present day Ottawa, that produced the initial impetus for urban development in the Ottawa area. The Rideau Canal, constructed by the British military Royal Engineers under the command of Colonel John By between 1826 and 1832, was intended to afford an alternative military route from Kingston to Montreal that was removed from the perceived danger of the American border.

The community that developed, first known as Bytown, originated with the Rideau Canal construction workers, who settled around the series of locks where the Rideau Canal connects to the Ottawa River. The construction activity, and social organization it produced, was overlain upon a preexisting local agricultural and timber economy.

The canal gave the Ottawa Valley both a focus and an identity: a place for gentility and lumber-men alike. As a result: "A valley society imploded on a construction camp" (Taylor, 1986; 14). A new 'gentry' moved in from the existing military settlements that were scattered throughout much of the Ottawa Valley.

This history of development produced a town of strange proportion. In reality it produced two towns and at least three classes of people. Upper Town was occupied mostly by a British and Protestant gentry with pretensions of social and

political leadership. On the other side of the Rideau Canal, in Lower Town, a larger population of working-class Roman Catholics were concentrated. This Roman Catholic population was itself split. Upon completion of the canal in 1832, the Irish labourers that had been recruited to work on the canal were displaced from the canal embankment in Upper Town they had originally occupied. Many moved their residences to Lower Town, where French Canadians, many associated with the lumber trade, were already established. A 'proletarian war' was initiated between Irish and French as the Irish attempted to drive the French Canadians off the river and thus guarantee jobs and higher wages in the timber camps to the Irish. This era, therefore, was characterised by conflict, both between Protestant and Roman Catholic and between French and Irish, that did much to promote the image of Bytown as a violent and rough town (Taylor, 1986).

This fragmented social pattern would persist throughout the history of Bytown and later, Ottawa. The "...city, divided within itself, persistently found it difficult to counter influences from outside, corporate oversight from the inside, or to assert a metropolitan influence of its own" (Taylor, 1986; 21).

During the 1830s and 1840s timber was gradually replaced by the sawn lumber industry, which by the 1850s had become the

lynch pin of the city's economy. However, while the sawn lumber industry was of enormous benefit to the local economy, its development seemed to militate against the development of the city as an entrepôt, and a place of secondary manufactures. The sawing of logs into rough boards appeared to be a more or less single-minded pursuit amongst the local lumberers. The upshot was a rather one-dimensional industry (Taylor, 1986).

Diversification of the Ottawa economy would depend, not on the lumber industry, but on political developments. In 1855, Bytown was renamed Ottawa and it was selected as the capital, first of the United Canadas, and then, in 1867, of the newly created Canadian confederation.

The crucial factor in determining Ottawa's selection as capital appeared to be politics. The contemporary provincial government was a Liberal-Conservative coalition, led by Cartier and Macdonald, which drew its support from the commercial men and ridings of the central part of the province dominated by Montreal. Montreal itself was put out of contention for capital status by the 'rebellion losses' riots of 1849. While several towns including Quebec City, Toronto, Kingston and Ottawa competed, only Ottawa, being still a modest lumber town, did not constitute a source of commercial

danger to Montreal and attendant political risk to Cartier and Macdonald (Taylor, 1986).

The border location of the federal capital has had enormous cultural significance. It lies on the language frontier between English and French Canada, which is symbolized (though imperfectly delineated) by the Ontario/Quebec border along the Ottawa River (Tunbridge, 1997). The separation of Canada into French and English portions has caused political and social problems throughout the history of Canada. Long standing English dominance, stemming initially from colonial control, resulted in Canada's symbolic system acquiring an English orientation. By this it is meant that the collective identity of Canada, promoted by the action of the state and represented by the multiplicity of symbols surrounding the rituals of public life, the functioning of institutions, and the public celebration of events exemplifies and reflects English Canada (Breton, 1984). This has resulted in the Québécois feeling isolated and excluded from this 'official' collective image. This feeling of exclusion has combined with resentment caused by a historical position of social subordination, and a genuine, though easily politically exploitable, fear of the loss of the French language and Québécois culture within Canada. The result has been periodic demands for Quebec's sovereign

independence emanating from within that province. This demand became more insistent and sustained, particularly following the 'Quiet Revolution' of the 1960s.

Ottawa-Hull's location, straddling as it does the border between Quebec and Ontario, and exacerbated by the history of Protestant-Roman Catholic conflict within the city, has powerfully augmented the symbolic significance of the Capital with respect to French-English tensions. As will be seen, the intersecting of capital status and border location has provided a spatial and symbolic platform from which a defence of Canadian unity could be mounted.

With regard to French/English tensions it must be noted that, originally, capital status did not extend to Hull north of the Ottawa river. Indeed, only Ottawa is mentioned as the seat of government of the Canadian Confederation in the British North America Act of 1867 (Knight, 1991).

Despite the bestowing of capital status upon it, in the early years of its existence Ottawa retained a distinctly rough and working-class character. Throughout the 19th century, beyond the construction of the parliament buildings, the federal presence was not truly reflected in Ottawa's urban morphology. The city grew haphazardly until 1899, at which time the incumbent Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, created the Ottawa Improvement Commission (OIC). This

Commission was the forerunner of Federal District Commission, and, in turn, the NCC, and had the mandate of 'beautifying' the city so that its appearance would accord more with its Capital status (NCC, 1998). This represented the first, albeit limited, intrusion of the federal presence in guiding the development and character of the capital area. It was an influence that would grow during the course of the 20th century.

Although the OIC did have federal funding, it was entirely local in scope. Its mandate was not truly urban planning, in the sense of laying out streets or establishing zoning laws. Rather its 'beautification' of the national capital involved picturesque landscaping under the plan drawn up by Montreal landscape architect Frederick G. Todd in 1903 (Fairbairn, 1993).

Two of Todd's major recommendations were the construction of an impressive boulevard linking Rideau Hall and the Parliamentary Buildings and the preservation of large natural parks adjacent to the urban areas. Additionally, Todd's report was the first to recommend improvements north of the Ottawa River (NCC, 1998) in Quebec province. However, the improvements here were solely predicated on the preservation of 'natural' areas.

In 1915, a further report, popularly known as the Holt Report, recommended the creation of a powerful federal district. The Report's authors were: "...of the firm opinion that the future improvements in the area about the Capital at Ottawa and Hull should not be attempted without first establishing a Federal District and securing for the Federal authority some control of local government" (NCC, 1998; 8).

Despite appearances to the contrary, The Holt Plan does not represent a pure federal planning process within the national capital. The Holt Plan Commission had three federal appointees and two municipal appointees (the mayors of Ottawa and Hull), and the costs were split: half federal and half local. In consequence, local planning concerns were strongly represented.

The most significant character involved in the development of the federal planning presence within the national capital was William Lyon Mackenzie King, Canada's prime minister during the years of the depression and the Second World War. Throughout his 50 years in Ottawa, King harboured a grand vision for re-shaping and beautifying the national capital, so that its morphology and character would better accord with its significance as the nation's capital.

King's first significant advance towards his goal of a more ordered capital was achieved in 1927, with the

transformation of the OIC into a newly mandated Federal District Commission (FDC). One of its most important changes was the provision of an increase in federal funding (Fairbairn, 1993). The FDC's jurisdiction was expanded to include some parts of the province of Quebec and it oversaw the intensification of town planning projects in the Capital area.

Both the City of Ottawa and the City of Hull could appoint Federal District Commission members, *ex officio*, (almost always the respective mayors) and had some influence. But they were somewhat compromised politically as elected local officials in a commission that reported to elected national officials. After World War Two this local mayoral influence would be further diminished through dilution as the FDC membership was expanded (Taylor, 1999).

While King's involvement with the re-shaping of the capital spanned the entire length of his political career, the heart and soul of his vision for the capital developed between 1936 and 1938, in tandem with his association with the French architect and town planner, Jacques Gréber (Fairbairn, 1993).

When the two met at the Paris Arts and Technology Exhibition in 1936, Gréber was the chief architect of the Paris Exposition. A second meeting resulted in Gréber offering his professional services to the Canadian government.

By February 1937, he had been formally engaged to draw up a plan for the improvement of the national capital, working in cooperation with the Department of Public Works. Gréber's first plan, made public in February 1938, includes several key points including the demolition of the Central Union station and the development of a war memorial at Confederation Square (Fairbairn, 1993).

The Second World War produced a hiatus in Gréber's involvement in federal planning in Ottawa. At the close of the conflict, however, he was once again invited to examine the prospect of creating an international capital at Ottawa. In 1945, an area of 2,330 square kilometres, almost equally distributed on both sides of the Ottawa River, was declared the National Capital District. Between 1946 and 1948 Gréber undertook an exhaustive examination of the Ottawa area, assisted by the staff of the FDC, including Canadian architects John M. Kitchen and Edouard Fiset. The result was the 1950 'Master Plan' (Fairbairn, 1993) popularly known as the Gréber Plan.

The Gréber Plan recommended large-scale works that would alter the face of the National Capital and create a modern city. It contained five main recommendations: Railway relocation away from the city centre; extension of the parkway network; decentralization of federal office complexes;

creation of a greenbelt; and expansion of Gatineau Park (NCC, 1998). However, while it was lauded as visionary, earlier studies, like those of Todd (1903), Holt (1916), and Cauchon (1921), had pointed the obvious problems and posed most of the solutions (Taylor, 1986).

The 1959 National Capital Act transformed the FDC into the NCC. With the NCC, elected representation from the local level was eliminated completely, and all appointments were order-in-council or cabinet appointments, though some, under the terms of the legislation, had to be from the capital area. Sitting local politicians were never appointed (Taylor, 1999).

The NCC was given the express task of transforming the Gréber Plan into reality. As a result, at its inception, the NCC inherited the flavour and vision of the Gréber Plan. Moreover, as will be seen, many of the NCC's early planning initiatives gained a heightened legitimacy through being associated with Gréber.

The National Capital Act also provided for the creation of the National Capital Region (NCR) (Figure 1). This encompassed a larger area than the old National Capital District, expanding it from 2,300 to 4,660 square kilometres across both sides of the Ottawa River.

The 1950s and 1960s were generally a time of intense governmental and business activity within the capital area.

Figure 1: The National Capital Region

Source: A Very Special Mandate. 1995
The National Capital Commission.

There was rapid population growth, fuelled by both the post-war baby boom and a prodigious increase in federal government employment activity. This population growth provided the main impetus for a major annexation, and subsequent development, of land by the City of Ottawa in 1950 (Taylor, 1986).

The burgeoning federal presence, through its agencies the FDC and then the NCC, was planning and building vast clusters of offices for its employees. The planning and construction of the de-centralized clusters were a direct implementation of part of the Gréber Plan. Moreover, the expanding role of government in the national economy and other facets of Canadian life also attracted thousands who had 'business with government'. The federal government apparatus dominated the economy of the local area (Taylor, 1986).

However, despite the federal governmental presence the nature of local businesses tended to remain small-scale and family-based up to the 1970s. The capital retained a strong local bias in its trading activities, and was one of the last major cities in Canada to be penetrated fully by the national retail chains (Taylor, 1986). This situation exacerbated the potential for a clash in planning vision between more locally focussed and parochial organizations and the federal planning presence represented by the NCC.

This brief history of the NCR has suggested several important themes with which the NCC became embroiled and which are taken up in the following analysis. First, the shifting and politicized national economic environment strongly impacted the region. This in turn influenced the federal government's attitude towards the financing of local development projects within the NCR; second, the complex and evolving relationship between the federal presence and the more locally oriented levels of government; and third, the capital's symbolic role as the site of the national government's efforts to respond to French-English tensions within the Canadian federation.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION: MAKEUP AND MODE OF OPERATION

The National Capital Commission (NCC) is a Crown Corporation created by the National Capital Act, proclaimed on February 6th, 1959. As has been seen, it succeeded the Ottawa Improvement Commission (1899-1927) and the Federal District Commission (1927-1959). The NCC constitutes the federal planning presence within National Capital Region (NCR) and its fundamental mandate is:

To prepare plans for and assist in the development, conservation and improvement of the National Capital Region in order that the character and seat of government of Canada may be in accordance with its national significance (AR, 1966-67; 2).

While this mandate underwent a certain amount of modification during the study period, it continues to provide the overarching rationale for the existence of the NCC and to provide the ultimate direction for its policies.

It has already been seen that the NCR is historically and culturally complex. It is also politically complex. The NCR includes Ottawa, Hull (in Quebec province, across the Ottawa River) and an extensive fringe region around both cities (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1990) and comprises various jurisdictional strata. The federal presence existed in 1959 in uneasy equilibrium (Tunbridge, 1997) with provincial, regional and municipal authorities, that is two provinces, two regional governments and more than 20 municipalities, including three cities. Moreover, the federal presence is not a single entity. A multitude of federal agencies, corporations and departments all exert some degree of influence on the affairs of the region (AR, 1973-74).

The make-up of the NCC was complex and multifaceted. There are twenty Commissioners appointed by the Governor-in-Council who hold office 'during pleasure' for a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms. The members, in addition to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, include at least one representative from each of the provinces, at least two from the City of Ottawa, at least one from the City of Hull, and at least one member from a local municipality in Ontario and Quebec respectively, other than the cities of Ottawa and Hull (AR, 1965-66). This rather complex make-up is designed to ensure that there is effective influence from every part of

Canada. While there is the appearance of local input, all the positions are Order-in-Council appointments.

The NCC includes many disparate committees, branches and divisions - each charged with implementing the broad mandate. In order to give an indication of the spectrum of responsibilities embraced by the Commission, five of these committees will be described here.

The first is The Executive Committee, the composition of which is dictated directly by the National Capital Act. Its membership includes the Chairman and Vice-Chairman as 'ex officio' members. Three commissioners are appointed by the Commission. It meets about once a month to authorize administrative expenditures and to make administrative decisions within policies approved by the Commission (AR, 1966-67).

Another committee is the Land Committee. This is composed of six experts in property matters and advises the Commission on land acquisition and recommends policy in relation to property administration (AR, 1966-67).

A third committee is the Advisory Committee on Design. Ten prominent Canadian architects, planners and landscape architects serve on this committee. It makes recommendations to the Commission on the external appearance of buildings and

works to be erected on federal lands within the NCR and deals with site planning and landscaping matters (AR, 1966-67).

The Information Advisory Committee comprises a fourth committee. This committee of five members considers all matters related to the information and public relations program of the Commission (AR, 1966-67).

A final committee is the Historical Advisory Committee. Composed of 20 experts on local history, this committee makes recommendations to the Commission for the preservation, marking and interpretation of historic buildings and sites within the NCR (AR, 1966-67).

The make-up of these various committees is important. The inclusion of so many 'experts' suggests a core disposition that is technocratic and elitist. This aspect of the NCC organizational structure has had important ramifications and will be explored in some depth in this thesis.

An important aspect of the NCC's mode of operation is occasioned by the planning laws of Canada. Urban planning is officially a provincial responsibility. However, the actual implementation and organization of planning decisions, including the all-important land-use zoning powers, is a combined provincial and municipal undertaking. As the federal planning presence, the NCC lay outside of this broad planning process. In consequence, it could only implement its own

planning vision by acquiring and directly owning land and property. The ownership of land was thus necessary to plan in the absence of land-use zoning powers.

As a result of this situation, the NCC has become a major landowner. During the 1960s, in the early years of its existence, the Commission undertook a massive program of land purchase and appropriation. Since that time, while there has been slight variation in the amount of land the Commission has owned, it has averaged approximately 10% - or 461 square kilometres - of the total land within the NCR (AR, 1996-97). This situation has had important consequences.

First, this unique *modus operandi* allowed the NCC to take initiatives and implement policies that may have fallen outside of the contemporary zoning laws. While this has allowed the NCC to have a proactive planning presence and permitted the implementation of many development initiatives, the ability to override municipal planning dictates, and to ignore the consequential protestations, has been a source of resentment within the NCR.

Second, the federal government directed that the NCC should acquire real estate in advance of need so that speculative development could not increase prices to the point where planning projects would become more expensive than originally envisioned (AR, 1973-74). This resulted in the

Commission always holding more land and property than it could immediately develop or utilize. While the expansion of land ownership that this policy encouraged increased the influence of the NCC within the NCR, it also fomented criticism of the Commission's basic approach, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s. This theme will be returned to later in this work.

A third important aspect of the NCC's land holding policy is its ownership of strategic corridors within the NCR. Of critical importance in this regard is its ownership of the Rideau River corridor. This has allowed it to have an impact over planning within the area which is out of proportion to the actual amount of land it owns.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION'S EVOLVING POLICY
INITIATIVES

Having established the reason for the existence of the National Capital Commission (NCC) and its basic mode of operation this thesis will now examine the evolution of its policies over the period of its existence. This historical approach will be set against both the broader societal evolution summarized earlier in the work and the more specific local and national concerns that arose during this period.

In order to illustrate how the operating policy and mandate of the NCC evolved during the course of the study period, three themes have been developed. These themes are: the Commission's response to changing fiscal circumstances; the Commission's evolving relationship with other organizations within the National Capital Region (NCR); and

the Commission's evolving stance with respect to initiation and utilization of aesthetically-sensitive planning projects. While there are obvious and important connections among these themes, each illustrates a separate facet of the Commission's response to its operating environment. Further, while there were specific local and national reasons that gave impetus for a particular policy direction, and these were (usually) overtly acknowledged, an attempt will be made to connect these various initiatives to the more general societal and urban evolution explicated in chapter two.

The vast majority of the information concerning the NCC's evolving operating policy was gleaned from the Annual Reports (ARs). More specifically, a discourse analysis has been performed on the contents of the Reports. The deconstruction of these Reports has revealed both motivational factors and tensions within the Commission, arising from the general operational context, which was not always made apparent in the more overt and accessible message. To further probe some of the issues raised by the deconstruction of the ARs, interviews with past and present NCC personnel were conducted. The interview material has been used mainly to augment, support and clarify conclusions drawn from the discourse analysis. Details of the interview subjects are provided in Appendix 1.

The era of 1959-1969 demonstrates a minimal amount of rhetoric employed in the ARs. They tend to comprise bland and technical accounts of activities proposed or undertaken by the Commission. While it is contended that this in itself is revealing of a certain 'mode of operation' underpinned by a particular ideology, the lack of rhetoric in these early Reports makes them less rewarding for deconstructive discourse analysis. From 1969 onwards the amount and intensity of the rhetoric employed increases, making the later Reports more suitable for the employment of this technique.

5.1: THE EVOLVING FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

This section will seek to place the NCC's history of spending, and latterly of revenue generation, into the more general evolution of the Canadian federal fiscal environment. Particular attention will be paid to the government policies that both responded to, and created, the financial climate within which the Commission had to operate. The approach is mostly qualitative, with quantitative information included to support particular assertions, or to clarify specific contentions.

Because of the enormous scope and complexity represented by fiscal conditions, this section will only consider Canada's

budgetary surplus, or deficit, over the course of the study period. This particular facet has been chosen because it is considered that this measure succinctly represents the more general financial climate, responding both to economic booms and recessions and the spending proclivities of the incumbent government. Further, this aspect of the fiscal environment, particularly from the mid-1970s onwards, became a highly politicized issue which increasingly preoccupied the federal government of the day. The budgetary situation thus became a vital factor in directing government policy and therefore had a huge impact upon the NCC.

In the early years of the NCC, from 1959 to 1963, the government ran a series of small deficits. These ranged from a high of a mere 2.1% of GNE in 1961, to a low of 1.4% of Gross National Expenditure (GNE) in 1963. But from 1964 to 1974 it had a run of small surpluses, ranging from a high of

While this discussion concentrates solely on the Federal budgetary condition, the situation is complicated by the system of federal transfers to the Provinces. In consequence, provincial spending policies also impact on the numbers. All budgetary figures quoted include transfers to the Provinces as these represent an obligation on the part of the federal government and constitute part of the overall financial context. For a full discussion on the complications involved with this system of transfers see Doern (1980) and Bird (1979).

During the course of this chapter the deficit (or surplus) will be presented as a percentage of either Gross National Expenditure (GNE), defined as the total expenditure by all levels of government in Canada, or Gross Domestic Product (GDP) defined as the total value of goods and services produced in Canada. This has been done in preference to quoting the nominal dollar amount both to put the figure into the larger financial perspective and to discount the effects of general price inflation.

2.4% of GNE in 1969 to a low of 0.1% of GNE in 1971 and 1972 (all figures from Bird, 1979; 46). In this apparently benign fiscal environment it is not surprising that spending initiatives were embraced enthusiastically by the incumbent Liberal government.

This trend is clearly illustrated in Graphs 1 and 2 in Appendix 2. These graphs track the total annual expenditure of the NCC. Graph 1 uses current dollar figures while Graph 2 uses 1992 constant dollars. Graph 2, therefore, accounts for general price inflation over the course of the study period. Both graphs clearly illustrate the increase in spending from 1960-61 to 1966-67. Indeed, current expenditure increased from \$12.1 million in 1960-61 to \$36.6 million in 1966-67. When inflation is taken into account the spending still rose from the \$65.4 million to \$176.0 million over the same period. This massive infrastructural spending on the part of the NCC matched well with the progressive and pro-development nature of the era of Modernism.

The changing style of presentation of NCC expenditures over the course of the study period caused some problems in calculating the figures used to construct Graphs 1 and 2. For the years 1960-61 to 1967-68 the figures quoted were termed: Gross Expenditures for Development and Improvement within the NCR. From 1968-69 to 1973-74 the figures quoted are those of Gross Expenditure from the table of Annual Expenditures. From 1974-75 onwards the figures were generated by adding the total Capital Expenditure and total Operating Expenditure together.

The lack of restrictions on spending can be gauged by the sheer scale of the infrastructural development that the NCC planned and implemented during this era. The 1960-61 Report indicates the high profile given to transportation infrastructure development, particularly the road and bridge building program. Work was being planned for the construction of Riverside Drive, Ottawa River Parkway and a new Ottawa River Bridge. Concern with efficient road transportation within urban centres is very indicative of Modernist planning sentiment. It must be noted, however, that this thrust was given greater impetus by the ongoing railway abandonment and relocation program that existed in Ottawa-Hull at this time.

Another indication of the enthusiastic spending policy of the NCC in the early 1960s is provided by the 1960-61 AR. This Report includes an illustration depicting a 'Civic Redevelopment Model' (Figure 2) of the Centre Town area. The picture evinces a typically Modernist vision for the centre, complete with bland and massive towerblocks intersected with wide and straight urban freeways. This vision could only be created by complete clearance of the existing fabric followed by a massive rebuilding program.

The 1962-63 AR further suggested the Commission's attitude towards infrastructural development when it stated that the NCC would "...provide for the construction of the

Figure 2: The "Civic Redevelopment Model"

Source: NCC Annual Report, 1960-61.

Queensway, Ottawa River Parkway, approaches to the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and new Union Station at Hurdman's Bridge" (AR, 1962-63; 16). Again it is the sheer scope of the proposed initiatives that reveal the Commission's potential for robust spending on development initiatives during this period.

An impression of the general attitude of the Commission towards financial considerations during this early period of its existence was provided by the interviews. A former senior planner with the NCC described this period as a time of "...acquire, acquire, acquire..." (Interview 4; July, 1999) on the part of the Commission and, further, that the "...NCC had a very important capital budget, and sometimes was unable to spend all the money the federal government gave [it] for Capital projects" (Interview 4; July, 1999). This is amplified by a senior director of communications at the Commission who stated: "...the NCC, with the acceptance of the Gréber Plan in the 1950s, was mandated - given a direction - to acquire...acquire for the future...to kind of shape the Capital we have today and we would like to see in the future. Therefore there was a lot of money spent by the NCC in expropriation, in acquisition, in buildings, in moving train stations....So a lot of money was spent in the 60s and 70s" (Interview 1; July, 1999).

A further indication of the scope and profile of infrastructural spending initiatives during the 1960s and early 1970s is the Place du Portage federal government office building program on Hull Island in the Quebec portion of the NCR. Figure 3 is a map of the core area of the NCR which depicts Hull Island. The sheer massiveness of the project gave an indication of the NCC's attitude towards spending policy during this era. The Hull redevelopment program also had political and symbolic significance and is fully dealt with in a later section.

While both Graphs 1 and 2 in Appendix 2 show a reduction in spending in the years 1967-68 to 1970-71 this appears to be something of an anomaly, possibly representing the completion of several development initiatives and a slowing of land acquisition. However, 1971-72 shows a big jump in expenditure - to \$53.4 million in current dollars and \$214.5 million 1992 constant dollars. This marked the highest yearly expenditure of the Commission in inflation controlled figures and is accounted for, in large measure, by the huge spending on the Place du Portage development.

Following this year, the pattern of the two graphs diverge. The current figures in Graph 1 demonstrate a rising trend - from \$53.4 million in 1971-72 to \$97.1 million in 1984-85, while the inflation controlled figures show a

Figure 3: The Core Area Of The National Capital Region

Source: Plan For Canada's Capital, 1998. The National Capital Commission

declining trend - from \$214.5 to \$134 million over the same period. This illustrates the effect of the high general price inflation at this time. Inflation ran at 7.7% per annum in 1973, 10.7% in 1974, and 10.9% in 1975. In 1981 it reached its highest level during the study period - 12.4% (all figures from Statistics Canada, 1999).

The high price inflation forms an important backdrop to the monetary environment of the 1970s and early 1980s. During the 1970s the growth of federal government spending as a proportion of GNE was not matched by a corresponding growth in government revenues. While expenditures grew from 36% to 41% of GNE, taxation revenue remained virtually constant relative to GNE from 1970 to 1977. Most of the resulting gap between expenditures and revenues - the deficit - was filled by borrowing. This, of course, substantially increased the size of the Canadian public debt (Bird, 1979). The result was that the series of small budgetary surpluses gave way to budgetary deficits in 1975. In 1975 the deficit was 2.4% of GNE, in 1976 it was 1.8% of GNE, and in 1977 it was 2.6% of GNE (Bird, 1979).

It was therefore only in the period of 1975 onwards that the government deficit grew substantially. The situation rapidly fostered consternation among the more right-wing elements of the political establishment. This, in turn,

spawned much activity amongst the academic community to explain this growth in government spending. See, for instance, Bird (1979); Krashinsky (1977); Auld (1976) and Amacher et al. (1975). Studies undertaken included investigation of demographic changes, political factors (particularly change in the organization of monetary policy and a post-war more activist stance on the part of the government), the specific effects of the provision of publically financed health care and more general effects of the Welfare State.

Thomas Courchene, writing in 1976, indicates why the budgetary deficit figures, which as a percentage of GNE did not differ much from the figures in the early years of the 1960s, caused such a brouhaha in the early 1970s:

Interaction among several factors has served to heighten both the interest in and importance of any investigation into monetary policy over this recent period. Foremost among these is the emergence of world-wide inflationary pressures which have kindled, in academic and policy areas alike, a renewed interest in the relationship between money and inflation. In addition, the fact that the exchange rates of the major Western countries are now floating means that monetary policy in any given country has gained a degree of independence of world monetary policy that is not possible under a system of fixed exchange rates....This implies that individual countries now have more freedom to direct monetary policy towards the achievement of various domestic economic goals, such as moderating the rate of inflation. At the same time, however, there is also a cost associated with this increased degree of freedom: under a flexible exchange rate a

country has to live with its own monetary policy errors (Courchene, 1976).

The Canadian dollar had been uncoupled from the American dollar and allowed to float on the global currency exchanges in 1970. Moreover, as already pointed out, Canada's inflation rate reached 7.7% in 1973, 10.7% in 1974, and 10.9% in 1975. This compares with figures of 1.1% in 1961, 1.1% in 1962, and 1.6% in 1963 (Statistics Canada, 1999). It appeared that it was this general environment of high price inflation coupled with the perception of a greater freedom in using monetary policy in the pursuit of economic and social goals - which gave an increased political dimension to fiscal policy - that acted to stir interest in the mid-1970s. It must be pointed out, however, that the general public appeared to remain relatively undisturbed by this trend throughout the 1970s and early 1980s.

This changing climate impinged on the operating policy of the NCC. The 1976-77 Report is notable for the change in attitude towards private business initiative, stating: "But inasmuch as private industry, trade and commerce are also increasingly important factors in the economic life of the region...the NCC...has been doing and will continue to do whatever and as much as it can within its mandate to facilitate viable avenues for these interests to flourish throughout the National Capital Area" (AR, 1976-77; 8). This

more accommodating and nurturing attitude to private business activity on the part of the Commission replaced the preexisting non-committal stance and presaged further changes to come.

The new attitude towards private business initiative forms one facet of a more general change in approach towards economic activity on behalf of the Commission. In this regard, the 1976-77 AR includes the first acknowledgement that the NCC might have a role to play in ensuring "...[the] expansion of the economic life in the region" (AR, 1976-77; 10). This is stated in the context of encouraging commercial activity on the Ontario side of the NCR in the face of reduced federal activity (and spending) there. It is interesting to note that this situation was exacerbated by the huge expansion of the federal presence, represented by the Place du Portage development, on the Quebec side of the NCR. This development necessitated a redirection of federal spending away from the Ottawa side and remained a primary focus of NCC activity.

Indeed, the sheer scope of the Place du Portage development, coupled with its high profile within the ARs, indicated that the fostering of government activity remained the top priority of the NCC. It appeared that the NCC still overwhelmingly maintained a 'government town' view of Ottawa-Hull - with the accounts of private business assistance woven

into the context of, and remaining subservient to, this larger, and more important 'reality'.

Despite this change in tone, NCC current dollar expenditures continued to increase between 1975 and 1980 as indicated by Graph 1 - from \$55.0 million in 1975-76 to \$80.6 million. However, Graph 2 indicates that inflation adjusted spending declined from \$159.4 million to \$153.8 million during the same period, suggesting that the Commission may have been more successful at curbing its spending than was apparent at the time.

Increasing concern with fiscal issues is demonstrated by the 1979-80 AR. This report devotes much space to an explanation of the generally tighter monetary situation that had developed from the mid-1960s onwards, even going as far as saying there were "...some who now fear economic stagnation for the Region" (AR, 1979-80; 22). The Report announces that during this period "...the National Capital Commission has had, like other federal departments and agencies, to adjust to a very tight budgetary situation" (AR, 1979-80; 22).

It appeared that the NCC was attempting to modify its general policy thrust in the light of changing fiscal conditions that specifically manifested themselves within the NCR through a lowering in the rate of federal job growth, a moderation in population growth and a realization of the

increased importance of private initiatives in driving future urban expansion. To this end the report stated that: "The slowdown in growth of the public service has increasingly meant that appropriate development of federal land must be directed towards accommodating commercial and institutional activities of the private sector and other levels of government" (AR, 1979-80; 45). There is also the first acknowledgement of direct NCC involvement in the development of tourism within the NCR, saying that a survey conducted in 1979 "...will support NCC policy development in the field of tourism" (AR, 1979-80; 45).

It would appear that the NCC's stance was altering to suit the perceived financial reality of the times. There was increased emphasis on nurturing economic activity within the NCR. This nurturing had two main thrusts. First, through the support of private business initiatives and, second, through the "...further development of the Capital's international role, through, if possible, the attraction to the Capital of international agencies, and through planning for the [further] accommodation of the diplomatic community" (AR, 1979-80; 23).

This evolving fiscal attitude can be related to the broader societal changes explicated in chapter two. It can be understood as one element in the transition to the era of the Culture of Consumption. Driven by worsening financial

circumstances, the NCC found itself in the position, through the strategic managing of its properties, of encouraging economic activity. Further, this activity would be predicated largely on the provision of leisure activities. The commercial success of these activities rested in part on an aesthetically pleasing urban ambience which had been nurtured in the past by other aspects of the NCC's policies, for reasons unrelated to commercial considerations.

The budgetary deficit continued to expand through the early 1980s, rising from 3.7% of GDP in 1980 to 8.0% of GDP in 1985 (Graham, 1990). Moreover, the rate of increase in NCC annual expenditure declined in this period. Despite some fluctuations, the current dollar expenditure only increased from \$80.6 million in 1980-81 to \$83.0 million in 1985-86. In inflation adjusted numbers it continued to trend downwards - from \$167.1 million to \$110.7 million.

This situation is reflected in the ARs. The 1981-82 AR indicates that private commercial considerations were being woven more fully into the planning decisions taken by the Commission, rather than being a mere afterthought. It reports that the modified Core Area Plan "...provides for an imaginative mixture of cultural, commercial, residential and diplomatic activities on both sides of the Ottawa River with Parliament Hill as a focus" (AR, 1981-82; 25 - emphasis

added). And again when the AR says the Commission will "...manage its Real Property Portfolio more effectively through a continuing interface with the private sector in the real estate market" (AR, 1981-82; 33).

This Report also reveals a new dynamic in this regard when it states: "The NCC is justly proud of its development of Winterlude, the mid-winter festival which has gained national recognition and is having a considerable local economic impact" (AR, 1981-82; 8). This is the first intimation that the Commission acknowledged the potential for revenue generation afforded by its ongoing promotion of festival events. The organization and patronage of festivals and events had been an increasingly important aspect of NCC policy from the mid 1970s onwards. The later recognition of their revenue generating potential fully complemented the Commission's change in stance with regard to promoting private commercial activity.

In the Fall 1984 general election the incumbent Liberal Party was defeated and the Conservative Party elected to power. The Conservatives brought increased emphasis upon internal management improvement within the government apparatus and the notion that this improvement could be initiated by running government departments more like a private business. Lloyd Brown-John (1990) argues that while

many accorded this increased stress upon improved productivity and managerial capabilities to the particular disposition of the Conservatives, the initiative formed part of a more general movement to enhance the productivity and efficiency of governments in the Western World.

While the notion that burgeoning government spending could be controlled by running government more like a business was well entrenched in some senior Public Managers as early as the mid 1970s, the election of the Conservatives encouraged a more general shift. They brought both an ideological predisposition towards running government 'like a business' and a gradual realization that not only was the ballooning debt and deficit a serious problem but that its management had potential as a potent political weapon (Brown-John, 1990).

The reform of government management proposed by the Conservatives had several facets. These included increased ministerial authority and accountability, program evaluation, cost recovery initiatives such as fee-for-service, and efficiency drives involving the contracting out of services to the private sector, and a general reduction in the size of the Public Service (Graham, 1990).

The NCC's response to this changing political climate was multi-faceted. Within the ARs there was further embellishment of the revenue-generating potential of the festivals and

events that it organized and promoted. The new political climate introduced by the Conservatives involved increased suspicion towards governmental bodies that merely spent taxpayers' money. As a result, any Crown Corporation that could demonstrate a positive contribution to revenue generation would probably find greater acceptance. It is not surprising, therefore, that the 1984-85 Report announced that with respect to events: "Combined expenditures by government organizations and private sponsors of approximately \$15.5 million resulted in a regional economic impact of \$25 million and national direct benefits, which include transportation and other costs before entering the region, amounted to a further \$24 million" (AR, 1984-85; 15).

In keeping with the Conservative government's priorities, the NCC trumpeted the shared organization of these events, saying "...recent successes with cost-sharing projects between different levels of government as well as the private sector indicate the thrust of future festival and event management" (AR, 1984-85; 15). The NCC's role in 'setting the stage' for developments initiated by other levels of government and the private sector is trumpeted by announcing that in response to "...the Commission's past accomplishments in creating pleasant and functional infrastructures and its efforts towards both animating and 'beautifying' the Capital, the private sector

has responded to the increased demand for facilities by enhancing the Capital with new shopping areas, fine restaurants and the ingredients necessary for a pleasant and stimulating nightlife" (AR, 1984-85; 15). This, once again, makes clear the realization on the part of the Commission that an aesthetically pleasing urban milieu can be directly utilized to nurture, support and facilitate private sector business activity. Further, a new strategy is now evident. Attention is called to the past actions of the NCC in creating this sensually pleasing cityscape. This is invoked to defend the credibility and importance of the Commission under pressure from the Conservative government.

The 1985-86 AR introduces the user-pay approach for some of the services provided by the Commission. The Report states: "The idea is to ask those who actually use services to pay part of the cost of providing them. The idea has arisen partly as the result of fiscal restraint and partly because of a changing perspective on the fairness of charging everyone (ie: taxpayers) for services used by relatively few" (AR, 1985-86; 2). This clearly demonstrates how Conservative Party ideology influenced NCC operating policy. The concept of user-pay, ideologically underpinned by notions of the sanctity of the tax-payer citizen and the desirability of general tax reduction, ideally suited the political flavour of the times.

The 1986-87 AR gives an even stronger indication of Conservative government influence on the operations of the NCC. A new facet of NCC policy is revealed in this Report. This is the implementation of a system to measure the efficacy of policy initiatives:

...we are placing new emphasis on the measurement of our effectiveness as an organization. Corporate planning and financial processes will play an important role in ensuring that programs introduced to fulfil our new mandate are delivered on time, within available resources, and with a high degree of effectiveness (AR, 1986-87; 4)

Part of this new facet of NCC policy involved the development of a 'Real Asset Management' policy which had the aim of "[ensuring] the optimal use and effective management of the Commission's urban land asset portfolio" (AR, 1986-87; 5). This policy required that: "Buildings and properties that no longer serve a strategic purpose will be disposed of" (AR, 1986-87; 5). Also championed is the appearance of dynamism with respect to the internal organization of the NCC: "...it was important that we first put our own house in order. So, 1986-87 began as a year of internal restructuring to better accommodate new tasks" (AR, 1986-87; 8).

The Report is replete with intimations of the tight fiscal environment. Examples include: "...in this era of belt-tightening..." (AR, 1986-87; 5); "...facing some difficult decisions as the result of financial austerity..."

(AR, 1986-87; 5) and: "...the need to live within a more modest budget provided from public coffers..." (AR, 1986-87; 6). This financial climate appeared to spur the Commission to find a "...creative approach to the financing of future endeavours [which] will continue to involve invitations to the private sector to sponsor events and make public contributions to capital projects" (AR, 1986-87; 6). This again emphasises the profile of private business involvement in NCC initiatives.

This acknowledgement of tight monetary conditions, and the need to respond to those conditions, was spurred particularly by the work of the Nielsen Task Force. The striking of the Nielsen Task Force (NTF) was one of the first initiatives of the Conservative Party following their election in 1984. The NTF was an extremely broad-based review of federal government programs. It commenced in September, 1984 but took several years to complete. It had two major objectives: "...better service to the public and improved management of government programs" (Ministry of Supply and Services, 1986; i). Moreover, it overtly included, and lauded, the private sector in the work of program review saying: "Never before has there been such a broad representation from outside government in such a wide-ranging

examination of government programs" (Ministry of Supply and Services, 1986; i).

The work of the NTF both capsulized and operationalized the Conservative government's political stance and policy towards public institutions. Its rather damning attitude towards Ci Crown Corporations - which included the NCC - is indicated by this quote: "The major rationale for...[Ci]...Corporations is to evade the structures and regulations which government and parliament imposes. Conceptually, it would be better to reform the regular system than to create more Corporations. Of course, this places even more importance than normal upon the need to simplify and reform the regular system" (Ministry of Supply and Services, 1986; 72-73). Its specific stance with respect to the NCC is demonstrated when it states: "The NCC at times seemed out of control in its acquisitions" (Ministry of Supply and Services, 1986; 72).

Perhaps the most far-reaching result of the NTF as far as the Commission was concerned was the requirement to rationalize its landholdings, so that it held only those lands with a demonstrable 'national purpose'. This requirement forced a change in its relationship with other planning bodies within the NCR and will be returned to in Theme 2.

It can be seen that the recommendations of the NTF would have far-reaching consequences for the NCC. The Commission was under pressure, and the more aggressive management of its land holdings in the interests of maximizing revenue generation allied with the drive for greater internal efficiency, following strategies adopted by private corporations, can be viewed as a response to that pressure. It indicates a public institution, steeped in the culture of an earlier era, attempting to re-image itself so as to conform to Conservative ideas of how an efficient Crown Corporation should organize itself.

The 1987-88 AR continues this theme. This report states that the NCC must demonstrate its accountability and efficiency through a "...rigorous approach to management" (AR, 1987-88; 6) in an era where "...the Commission's financial resources from public coffers are unlikely to expand to any significant degree" (AR, 1987-88; 7). Much of the Report reiterates previous accounts with respect to imaging the evolving mode of operation of the Commission. It again emphasises the implementation of "...a rigorous approach to management (AR, 1987-88; 6). But now yet another new strategy emerges in this regard: "...new techniques of performance measurement are required to assure our clients - the Canadian people - that we are making efficient use of the resources

entrusted to us, and that the programs we have implemented are actually achieving their stated purposes" (AR, 1987-88; 6). The portraying of the Canadian people as 'clients', with the associated public accountability that this term implies, is very indicative of a more business orientation of the organization. It also subtly implies that the Commission is as vulnerable as any other private business would be if it fails to satisfy its customers. This stance smacks of trying to appeal to the political persuasions of the Conservative government by acting in accordance with 'sound' business principles.

The departmental belt-tightening initiated under the Conservative government did produce a reduction in the size of the deficit (from 8.0% of GDP in 1985 to 4.4% of GDP in 1989) although it did not eliminate it. In this regard it is interesting that, despite all the lip-service paid to restraint and efficiency in the ARs and the rumblings of the Nielsen Task Force, the annual expenditure of the Commission increased quite sharply between 1985-86 and 1988-89 - from 83.0 million to 108 million in current dollars and from 110.7 million to 133.6 million in inflation controlled dollars. This may be partially explained by the fact that the recommendations of the NTF did not become fully effective until the early 1990's.

Following the re-election of the Conservative Party, prime minister Brian Mulroney announced in December, 1989 a new initiative to renew the public service of Canada. Key to this was a drive for further efficiency. "Whatever increases in productivity the government needed in order to carry out its varied mandate would be found in new efficiency measures and better management techniques" (Zussman, 1990; 248). Katherine Graham contends that the 1989-90 period marks the first time a political consensus began to emerge that attacking the debt and the deficit should be a top priority, and that expenditure control by the federal government should become the way to achieve this end (Graham, 1990). In other words, the call for efficiency and 'sound' business practice by governmental departments was no longer confined to the ruling Conservative Party, it now appeared to be supported by a more general groundswell of public opinion. All this served to increase the pressure still more on the NCC.

Once again the Commission responded to the circumstances. The 1989-90 Report contains the first overt support for the NCR's burgeoning high technology industry. It announces under the title 'Creative Use of Commission Lands':

In 1989 the NCC negotiated a long-term lease with Bell Northern Research of Nepean that will permit the company to expand its World Headquarters for Advanced Technology and Research onto adjacent lands in the Greenbelt. The BNR agreement will see the eventual quadrupling of the company's present

facilities and employees, providing a substantial boost for the high technology industry in Canada. The Commission will use the proceeds of the lease to acquire environmentally sensitive properties elsewhere in the Capital Region. This creative use of land resources could point the way to other similar ventures in the future - enabling the Commission to achieve important development and conservation goals for the Capital without drawing on the public purse (AR, 1989-90; 9).

Here the Commission justifies the abandonment of some of the its landholdings in the Greenbelt, land that had, in earlier Reports, been considered sacrosanct. Now its surrender is imaged as 'creative' use of its land resources that would form part of an ongoing strategy to achieve important development and conservation goals without drawing on the public purse. Exactly what 'environmentally sensitive properties' would be acquired to replace the lost land is not revealed. Also interesting is the claim that this deal would be a general benefit for Canada and not just the NCR, an important point for a Crown Corporation mandated to serve the whole of Canada.

The 1990-91 AR exhibits an abrupt and complete change in reporting style. The Report is limited to a brief two page account of a review of the past year. There are no accompanying photographs, and minimal rhetoric is employed. The fairly dry account of 'accomplishments' during 1990-91 is indicated by this quote:

- the Capital Marketing Plan, designed to make Canadians more aware on a national scale of the

symbolic role of the Capital, began to be implemented;

- planning for Phase 2 of Confederation Boulevard commenced;

- construction started on the Chateau Laurier Terrace to house the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, scheduled to open in 1992;

- the NCC successfully negotiated an agreement in principle with Public Works Canada and the City of Ottawa to dispose of six properties and transfer maintenance and rehabilitation responsibilities for five non-NCC properties and four NCC roadways to the City (AR, 1990-91; 4).

While no reason is given for this change in communication strategy, the unfavourable fiscal conditions that may have contributed to it are indicated in this quote from the 'Letter of Transmittal':

A Major challenge for the Commission was a further budget reduction during this past year. Faced by this cut - which is compounded by the effects of inflation - we were nonetheless able to maintain essential core services and programs, although we were forced to cancel some previously scheduled initiatives and implement a number of austerity measures (AR, 1990-91; 1).

The Report also pointed out that: "Real assets management...[continued to represent]...a significant portion of Commission activities" (AR, 1990-91; 3). It would appear that so sensitive had the Commission become to financial stringency that even the production of an expensive looking AR was strategically unpalatable.

The greater stress on the maintenance of its properties is continued in the 1991-92 AR. This Report proclaimed that the Real Asset Management Strategy "...focuses maintenance and rehabilitation activities on assets that play a direct role in supporting the Commission's mandate" (AR, 1991-92; 3). It also made clearer the thinking behind the 'strategic' use of NCC land which underpinned the previously reported deal with Bell Northern Research (BNR):

The...Real Property Management Funding Strategy permits the sale of lands that are not essential to our mandate as a source of revenue to support the rehabilitation and maintenance of NCC real property assets. The Funding Strategy also permits the transfer or divestiture of maintenance costs for Commission assets which are municipal-like. Integration of the Real Asset Strategy will link the assets with the programs that take place on them (AR, 1991-92; 3).

The sale of lands not considered essential to the mandate of the NCC, allied to the details of the BNR deal which saw the leasing out of a sizeable chunk of the greenbelt land, indicated that the Commission no longer saw the preservation of the greenbelt in its entirety as a priority. This was a great change from earlier Reports extolling the value of the 'green necklace' in containing suburban sprawl and encouraging a 'dense and lively core'. This provides an indication of the vast change in operating policy that had apparently been forced upon the Commission by changing political priorities and fiscal circumstances.

The tight fiscal operating environment was again made clear when the Report announced:

To compensate for reduced allocations from the federal treasury, the Commission implemented ten revenue-generation projects during 1991-92. They included the introduction of user fees, land use approval fees and environmental assessment fees. Revenue generation also focussed on the recruitment of event sponsors and the testing of alternative property management techniques. Twenty additional revenue-generation projects are being considered (AR, 1991-92; 3).

Following this trend, the 1992-93 AR again places great stress on general fiscal conditions. Indeed, a majority of this AR is devoted to the subject. It announced:

In a period of declining resources, an aging asset base, and increased cultural programming resulting from its expanded mandate, the NCC must depend more and more on revenue generation and cost reduction. Operating revenues and revenues generated from rents were less than anticipated, particularly in commercial properties, due to the slow economic recovery in that sector. Revenues from easements and property tax recoveries increased, as did rents from recreational leases to municipalities and school boards. Revenue generated from user access fees and maintenance services amounted to \$2.1 million, slightly less than the forecasted \$2.4 million. The sponsorship of events exceeded the target set, bringing in \$1.58 million worth of cash and essential services, \$0.8 million of which was for the celebration of Canada's 125th anniversary (AR, 1992-93; 3).

The rather full explication of the fiscal conditions the NCC was operating under is utilized to justify the change in operating policy represented by the Real Assets Management Plan. Indeed, fiscal conditions had now degenerated to the

point where sale of NCC land had "...been significantly lower than expected. Not only had the real property market been soft, but the primary clients of past land sales, the regional and local governments, are undergoing major spending cuts. As a result, the NCC will be reconsidering its strategy to fund asset rehabilitation from land disposals" (AR, 1992-93; 4).

An interview with a senior financial planner of the NCC revealed more of the pressure that the Commission was under during this period:

If you look prior to 1994, in the Mulroney years when the Conservatives were in power, they were doing very much like other political parties were doing across Canada, in fact, across North America...so the reductions were mostly on the infrastructural rehabilitations and things like that....So the reductions were targeted from the centre. They were targeted to capital expenditures, rehabilitation deferrals - that was the whole federal government strategy. You did not have any say [as to] where the reductions would take place...it was dictated from the centre" (Interview 2; July, 1999).

This indicates a general perception of a lack of operational freedom within the NCC under the Conservatives. Their role appeared limited to responding to dictates from the central Treasury Board.

Graphs 1 and 2 do indicate that this imposed fiscal restraint did have an impact on the spending of the commission. While there was some fluctuation, between 1989-90 and 1993-94 the rate of increase slowed dramatically. In

current figures the increase was from \$108.8 million to \$111.3 million. In inflation adjusted figures spending was lowered slightly - from \$122.2 million in 1989-90 to \$109.3 million in 1993-94.

The 1993 General Election saw the return of the Liberal Party to power. Surprisingly, the Liberal Party proved to be more determined to combat the deficit than the previous Conservative government had been. Even more surprisingly, given its historical predilection to healthy program spending, it achieved this success through the introduction of more extensive spending cuts (Swimmer, 1997). In broad terms, despite numerous statements on the record stressing the importance of reducing the deficit, the Conservative Party, over nine years, achieved only sporadic and unsustained deficit reduction. The Liberal government, however, was able to establish a clear deficit reduction trend (Maslove and Moore, 1997). Under the Conservatives the deficit went from a high of 8% of GDP in 1985 to a low of 4.4% in 1989. In 1993 it stood at 5.9%. Under the Liberals it declined from 5.0% in 1994, 3.7% in 1995, and 2.4% in 1996 (Swimmer, 1997).

Perhaps more importantly than this fiscal success, the Liberals distinguished their approach from the Conservatives by attempting to integrate economic, environmental and social policy, and placing less reliance on market forces. The

Liberal Party retained the idea that government could be a force of good in Canadian society (Swimmer, 1997). As one might anticipate, this new approach was welcomed by the NCC⁴.

However, change was not instantaneous. The 1993-94 AR introduces the policy of national marketing. The incorporation of national marketing is significant. It demonstrates an organization still further immersed in a private business-like mode of operation, in effect advertising its product - the NCR - throughout Canada. In the same business vein, the NCC's policies were delivered "...through a number of effective partnerships (with, for example, the Association touristique de l'Outaouais and the Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority" (AR, 1993-94; 6). The Commission imaged its role with regard to strategic partnerships as moving "...from being an event producer to stage manager" (AR, 1993-94; 6). The association with tourism promoting agencies is very telling in an era where urban tourism was increasing rapidly and its revenue generating potential increasingly recognised. Here again, the connection can be made to broader social forces. Urban tourism, with its intimations of

⁴ Many political commentators contend that in actual practice the Liberals fell short of these ideals, adopting policies more fiscally conservative than the previous Government's. For a critical assessment of the Liberal's performance and the reasons they were able to adopt such policies see Maslove and Moore (1997), Claire Sjolander (1997) and Juillet and Toner (1997).

leisured, discretionary spending in a convivial social and physical setting, was an important facet of the Culture of Consumption.

The increasing prominence of revenue generation initiatives within NCC policies is demonstrated by the fact that a whole section of the AR is devoted to the generation of revenue, reduction of costs, and the improvement of operational efficiency with the "...add[ing of] \$1 million in revenues over 1992-93..." (AR, 1993-94; 8) established as a performance target.

The impact of the Liberal Party's policies become evident in the 1994-95 AR. This Report lays increased stress on the modification of the internal structure of the Commission. It reports:

The structure of the Commission began to change in 1994-95. Like every part of the federal government, the National Capital Commission has been asked by Parliament to rethink its mandate, to reduce the cost of its operations and to find new and more effective ways of doing business. The NCC responded last year by reviewing the Commission's operational resources and services it delivers, and by looking hard and critically at everything from the size and nature of NCC land assets all the way to the structure of its committees and branches. As a result, the NCC is ready to implement changes that will ultimately create a very different and much smaller organization....

...[S]ervices that can be purchased at less cost from the private sector will be contracted out, initially through employee takeover corporations; and the latest technology and information management techniques will be applied to reduce our operating costs. The process has begun and, in

three years, the NCC will be a lean, very focussed and more effective organization (AR, 1994-95; 1-2).

Despite the appeal to fiscal rectitude trumpeted here, what is also evident is an organization more in control of its operating strategy. The NCC itself was now "ready to implement changes". This message is reinforced by the senior financial planner who stated that this Program Review:

...was really more of an intelligent approach - it was initiated by the Liberals....Ultimately there was a financial target and everybody had that target, it was specific. But the 'how' wasn't dictated and you felt there was some flexibility to get around that target....It worked very well, but it was multi-factored and it was because we were allowed...we were given the questions, the rationale, [but] we were allowed to do it ourselves - versus 'we are cutting 2 million of your capital for official residences' (personal interview; July, 1999).

The 1995-96 AR contains a section explaining the Commission's 'Real Asset Management and Development' policy. This had the strategic objective: "To reduce the cost to government of managing and operating its real assets by approximately 25 percent by 1997-98" (AR, 1995-96; 21) and the following performance indicators:

1. Development initiatives, by 1999-2000, will yield annual net revenues of \$1.345 million in addition to achieving annual cost savings of \$121,000.
2. Disposal of non-national interest lands and divestiture of municipal-like assets by the year 2000 (AR, 1995-96; 21).

This approach mimics private business strategy of setting strategic goals and the projected image of the emplacement of a tangible measuring system whereby the attainment of those goals can be judged. It has a 'punchy' and directed message, replete with the standard 'buzz' words (for example, 'high impact' and 'outreach and promotion') often utilized in private business plans. The whole section seems designed to further entrench the impression of an organization of dynamism and vitality, operating along 'sound' business principles.

In the same vein, the AR now advertises the previous 'mandate': "To create pride and unity by making the Capital a meeting place for all Canadians, by using the Capital to communicate Canada to Canadians and by safeguarding and preserving national treasures in the Capital" (AR, 1995-96; 7) as a 'Mission'. The production of a mission statement was a favoured tactic of private business at this time. It was intended to impart an impression of dynamically and heroically tackling difficult but worthy goals. It also carries with it an intimation of the reasonable assurance of success in the attainment of those goals. In line with this more business oriented approach, the difficult fiscal conditions under which the Commission was operating were given a high profile - but now the emphasis was more on the NCC's successful response to this situation. The Report states:

Faced with severe budget cuts in early 1995, the NCC responded by developing an innovative commercialization plan that has not only saved jobs, but has also kept the core programs of the NCC intact and lowered costs by 24 percent. Contracts have now been signed with six Employee Takeover Corporations (ETCs) to buy land maintenance services that were formerly delivered by the NCC (AR, 1995-96; 5).

And again:

The NCC is the first public agency to attempt large-scale commercialization. Working without a map in 1995/96, the NCC went through a process of trial and error in developing and implementing its revolutionary plan. The result is the first known North American model for public service delivery that can be used by all levels of government to reduce costs while continuing to deliver quality service to the public (AR, 1995-96; 15).

Once again the NCC has changed its public persona to suit the tenor of the times. It has been able to promote these changes in operating mode as a successful model for other bureaucratic, government bodies to follow.

The formation and subsequent success of the ETCs was a source of particular pride for the senior employees of the NCC and was frequently referred to in the interviews. The senior financial planner described the formation of the ETCs in this way:

...and so we started looking at [employee takeovers] and we said "yes, we are responsible for maintaining the Capital, but do we actually have to be out there cutting the grass?" And it quickly came to us: "no". So then it was: "OK, what are the other [Crown Corporations] doing? Well they contract out. Well, wait a sec, we have been doing it for 100 years, there's nobody out there to do

it. And what do we do with all our people, certainly we cannot just kick them out". So it was very much because this organization believes in its people - it's always supported its employees 100%...it was very much on human grounds, on moral-values grounds that we were hanging on to this option....We believed in our people, we were a family, we had very strong ties to the welfare of everyone. Also we believed that no one was out there, that nobody could do it better than our people.

So we devised this whole ETC. and it was quite restrictive, it was quite rigid, it was done in partnership with Treasury Board....So then we went on and commercialized - transferred our operations to our employees. And here we are...the first three years [are up] - most of the contracts were for three years. [They] were re-entered publically, and in all cases what used to be called the ETCs won, again, the bids. and so they are truly successful private sector firms (Interview 2; July, 1999).

A senior communications director added this:

...and we had the option of simply cutting those positions and contracting out but we felt...that wasn't very humane. The employees had been here for quite a while and had created an expertise not everyone has. You know, how do you maintain a canal in winter? The planting of millions and millions of tulips, and so on. So we identified those areas...starting with maintenance...and said we were going to ask internally if employees were interested in forming their own company. We would assist them - we would give them access to experts, we would give them...time off to meet with experts (lawyers, financial advisors) - how to establish a company. These were called ETCs. We were successful in the maintenance functions in that six companies [became] successful proponents. They were successful in their bid [and] we were successful in reducing our budget by 25%, which was our goal....At the end of last year we went out again to tender, but this time...it was open to the general public as well, not just the ETCs....All our ETCs were successful....They were still able to deliver and we saved an additional 10% on top of

the 25%! So it's proved very effective....Through that whole process we reduced...we were approximately 900 employees, we are now almost 400. And we did not have one grievance during that whole process (Interview 1; July, 1999).

Despite the positive imaging of the ETCs in both the ARs and the interviews the process was not without criticism and opposition. The program met with delays when it was resisted by public-service unions, who took the matter to court but were unsuccessful (Nankivell, 1996).

The final Report to be analysed is the 1996-97 AR. This Report, while continuing the major themes of its predecessors, does contain some new nuances. These include increased emphasis on a sympathetic approach to the ongoing internal reorganization to produce: "A smaller, leaner Commission" (AR, 1996-97; 9). This reorganization, now explicitly termed a "commercialization plan" (AR, 1996-97; 5), was accompanied by a "...determination to implement change in a compassionate way that encompasses corporate responsibility to employees" (AR, 1996-97; 5). While mentioned in the previous AR, the increased elevation of the need for 'corporate responsibility' in this regard can be judged by the fact that it occupied a sizeable portion of 'The Chairperson's Message' at the beginning of the Report.

As Graphs 1 and 2 indicate, the period of 1994-95 to 1996-97 did produce a decrease in annual expenditure on the

part of the NCC. In current dollars, spending declined from 128.2 million in 1994-95 to 94.9 million in 1996-97. Inflation adjusted figures show a decline from \$125.7 million to \$89.6 million over the same period. While there are too few figures to establish a clear trend, there is an indication of success in the Commission's aim of controlling spending.

This section has attempted to trace the spending policy of the NCC from its inception in 1959 through to the late 1990s and to relate this to more general fiscal conditions within Canada during this period. It can be seen that the policy towards spending and revenue generation has undergone considerable change over this period and that this change can be correlated to the prevailing fiscal conditions and the associated political imperatives of the day. In this regard the Commission proved itself to be far more responsive to the dictates of its political masters than to influence from more general public opinion. Despite long-standing claims to the contrary, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s, the Commission appears to have retained an elitist and 'expert' ethos and to have retained its distance from grass-roots influence. This is perhaps to be expected, given the appointed nature of its personnel and the secretiveness of its decision-making process.

Relating the evolution of the spending and revenue generating policies of the Commission to the broader societal and urban evolution explicated in chapter two is more problematic. However, the relatively free spending of the 1960s and 1970s can be related to the pro-development ethos of Modernism; and the revenue-generating strategies and efficiency drives of the late 1980s and 1990s, particularly the utilization of a sensually pleasing cityscape to augment the promotion of profitable festivals and events, to aspects of the Culture of Consumption. The era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience cannot be directly related to any of the fiscal policies of the NCC. This is, perhaps, not surprising as its impact lies outside of normal capitalist relations and financial considerations. Its influence is hinted at, though, in priming people's tastes and expectation of a sensually-pleasing urban experience. This desire was then exploited to assist revenue generation during the Culture of Consumption. In this case, the development of a sensually pleasing urban environment was utilized to assist revenue generation from festivals and events.

5.2: THEME 2 - THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

It was contended in chapter two that urban planning in the era of Modernism was characterised by a tendency towards centralized authority and an elitist and technocratic approach. Moreover, this work has noted that the Postmodern era has been characterized by a challenge to this mode of planning practice. This theme will analyse whether the NCC's mode of operation, created and developed in the Modernist era, responded to the challenge to Modernistic planning practice that occurred in the Postmodern period. This will be investigated principally by an examination of the NCC's evolving relationship with other public planning bodies within the NCR, and with business groups and 'grassroots' organizations.

In order to fully ground this account within the specifics of local conditions, this section will commence with an examination of the local urban planning environment during the early years of the Commission's existence. The passing of The Ontario Planning Act in 1946 delegated responsibility for the implementation of city planning initiatives to the municipal level of government. This meant that, while overall responsibility for municipal planning lay with the provincial

government, the provincial involvement was actually restricted to defining broad planning directions, the undertaking of background research, the provision of technical advice, and, most importantly, much of the necessary financing. It also acted as an approval body for planning initiatives formulated at the municipal level of government (Ontario Economic Council ((OEC)), 1973).

The actual, material implementation of city planning, including the creation and execution of zoning bylaws, was performed at the municipal level. The Ontario Planning Act stipulated urban planning was to be carried out not in municipalities but in 'planning areas', and plans were to be made not by elected councils, but by appointed planning boards. Moreover, the establishment of a planning area was the prerequisite for preparing an official plan. Under the Planning Act an official plan was required before any municipal planning activity could take place. The creation of a planning area was, therefore, essential to all municipal planning activity (OEC, 1973).

Properly employed, these provisions should have enabled municipalities to mount comprehensive planning programs which were tailored to their particular needs, resources and inclinations (OEC, 1973). In particular, it afforded the flexibility to undertake planning initiatives that encompassed

a larger territory than that occupied by a single municipality. This was seen as important in an era where burgeoning urban populations, and consequential spatial spread of urban areas, meant that single municipalities often no longer constituted the most logical and rational planning units. Planning units could be created that encompassed several municipalities and allow for a more comprehensive urban planning process.

However, while the basic intent of the act was sound, the OEC (1973) is able to point out some important shortcomings in the implementation of the Planning Act. One problem was that most planning areas that were created were, in fact, coterminous with single municipalities. This negated the potential advantage of comprehensive planning over a more logical and complete metropolitan area. The reasons for this included both a historical precedent of municipalities defending their 'turf', and a lack of communication and cooperation between neighbouring municipalities. A second problem was the lay-person character of the planning boards. They could seldom offer technical and professional expertise in an era where these were increasingly seen as necessary for successful planning. On a more subtle level, the Ontario Economic Council is able to point to the unhappy position of the municipal councils in the planning process as increasing

the problems. It states: "The position of the municipal council [was] most uncomfortable, with it being placed by legislation somewhat apart from the planning process and deprived accordingly of the power to implement" (OEC, 1973; 3).

This situation often manifested itself in an obstructionist stance on the part of municipal councils with respect to decisions taken by the planning boards. Under the Planning Act, adoption by council of a plan prepared by a planning board was never mandatory and "jealous, distrustful, or uninterested councils could ignore, or procrastinate on or dilute the work of a board" (OEC, 1973; 6). A second untoward result of the councils' separation from plan making was "the encouragement given to councils seeking to evade responsibility, or even involvement, in controversial planning issues. Planning boards were frequently cast in the role of sounding boards for public reaction" (OEC, 1973; 6).

The overall result of this situation was a certain paralysis in planning at the municipal (and by extension the provincial) level throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The Ontario portion of the NCR, like the rest of the province, was greatly impacted by this situation.

The first AR produced by the newly created NCC was published in 1960-61. It appears to adopt a generally

authoritative tone and makes clear the dominance of the NCC in planning activities within the NCR at this time. This situation reflected both the position of the NCC as the federal planning presence in the NCR and the planning paralysis at the municipal and provincial level. The NCC extended its planning influence not only through the management of the land and property it owned but also through the provision of planning advice to municipalities. Indeed, in 1960-61 "sixteen municipalities were receiving or had received advice from the Commission on the planning of their areas" (AR, 1960-61; 26).

The 1960-61 Report's explanation of the contemporary railway relocation program demonstrates a 'top down' approach to planning when it says this entails the employing of "...one of the leading architectural firms in Canada...[and a] leading consulting engineering firm" (AR, 1960-61; 13). The tone is continued when it reports that: "Agreement has been reached and a draft document prepared which is now being put in final form by the Legal Departments of the various Parties concerned" (AR, 1960-61; 14). These passages demonstrate an authoritative approach on the part of the Commission with the dominance of 'expert' input.

The railway relocation program, involving the removal of many city centre rail lines and the relocation of the main

train station from its existing high profile location opposite the Chateau Laurier Hotel to its present suburban location, was a central feature of the Gréber Plan. In the early years of its existence the NCC was assigned the task of implementing many of the Gréber Plan's recommendations. While this plan was imbued with the flavour of massive, technocratic and elitist planning activity - and thus encapsulated many of the characteristics of Modernistic planning practice - it was also considered visionary and innovative at the time. In consequence, the railway relocation program had a heightened legitimacy and profile which may have acted to dispel some of the criticism of the disruption occasioned by the work.

The 1962-63 AR provides a vivid example of the authoritative approach that dominated NCC operating policy during this period. In 1962 the Commission's program of property acquisition was accelerated by the decision of the Government to acquire and develop the area known as Lebreton Flats. This was a gritty rail, industrial and working-class residential area to the west of the parliamentary precinct on the south shore of the Ottawa River. As the AR reports:

In order to ensure that there would be no land speculation with resultant increased cost to the Government of Canada, the proposed acquisition of the Lebreton Flats was a closely guarded secret of the [NCC]. To safeguard security on the project, a blanket expropriation was placed on all the land required....

Approximately 24 hours before a public announcement of the Government approval of the project, the Commission advised 270 affected land-owners by mail of the method which would be employed in settling the claims for compensation. Simultaneously, the legal, survey and appraisal work was initiated. (AR, 1962-63; 14-15).

Another example in this vein is the stark statement: "It was necessary to demolish 40 buildings to provide for the construction of the Queensway, Ottawa River Parkway, approaches to the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and new Union Station at Hurdman's Bridge" (AR, 1962-63; 16).

It is difficult to imagine a clearer demonstration of the general approach of the NCC at this time. There appeared to be neither dialogue nor agreement with the affected parties prior to enactment. Indeed, the very secretiveness of the process was hailed as a virtue. What is more revealing, though, is the lack of rhetorical defence of the action within the Report. Its reporting consists of a cold and bland description of events. This would seem to indicate that the action was considered neither unusual nor controversial and the NCC was acting within the acceptable limits prescribed by the sentiments prevailing at this time.

The NCC's concern with transportation initiatives during this period was taken up by a senior director of communications with the Commission:

The NCC on behalf of the federal government looks at long-range planning and land-use and some of those land-uses are obviously for transportation reasons. Back in the '60s there was no regional government so we did...[transportation planning]....[T]hese lands, when purchased, or in a lot of cases expropriated,...it was quite clear that it was for a regional transportation corridor....We had assumed, over the years, some functions that although were not part of our mandate, specifically, did not fall under any other level of government's mandate (Interview 1; July, 1999).

This again demonstrates the planning vacuum that existed within the NCR at this time. The acquisition of lands that served a regional transportation purpose rather than a broader national purpose was to have important future consequences.

The 1964-65 AR underlines the NCC's continued dominance in planning matters within the NCR by reciting: "The Commission continued to act as a co-ordinating agency between the various municipalities located in the National Capital Region (AR, 1964-65; 11) and similarly: "Another unique service offered by the Commission is the standing offer to provide technical or financial assistance to any municipality wishing to prepare plans for land use, zoning, civic design or related matters" (AR, 1964-65; 13). This indicates that the Commission continued to view itself as a repository of technical expertise and controller of purse strings. It also gives an intimation of the Commission's perception of its own

dominance with respect to its relationship with the municipalities.

The 1968-69 AR continues to demonstrate muted rhetoric, with just a brief, somewhat bland, summation of current planning initiatives. Still dominant is the rational, authoritarian and technocratic approach of the Commission. For example the Commission held "...frequent meetings with the technical staff..." (AR, 1968-69; 6). The rationality extended to the use of mathematical modelling and systems to arrive at planning decisions. The Report announces that three systems would comprise "the core elements of the regional planning process; an economic development model, a household, population and land use allocation model and a transportation model" (AR, 1968-69; 4).

This form of systems planning followed the tenets of the Lowry model. This was a mathematical model concerned with the generation and spatial allocation of urban activities and land-uses which was very popular amongst urban planners at the time. It was developed by I.S. Lowry in 1964 for the Pittsburgh urban region (Johnston et al, 1994). Lowry's monograph was viewed as a breakthrough in attempts to model urban systems. For the first time it offered an apparently simple and elegant insight into the way an urban economy worked. It integrated several employment and household

sectors through an aggregate economic relationship and an implied demand for travel (Weber, 1984; Wilson, 1972). In contrast to preceding models, the Lowry model was computable with the contemporary level of computer technology, and yet managed to combine several of the then current macro-geographical ideas concerning urban areas. Principal amongst these ideas were the existence of constant laws of human behaviour and a consistent and integrated view of the functioning of a large urban area. Proponents of mathematical modelling of this type considered that it could be used to accurately guide public investments in urban infrastructure and safeguard the development process (Weber, 1984).

The NCC's incorporation of the Lowry model accords well with its authoritative and technocratic stance at this time. The model's total reliance on 'rational' human behaviour totally ignored any potential individual human agency or spontaneity. Further, its total disregard of social structure - particularly class, income and wealth distribution - helped to legitimize and reinforce the Commission's dictatorial approach to planning, particularly by concealing the presence of social plurality. At the same time, the use of modelling

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A fuller account of the use of modelling in urban planning can be found in Wilson (1974), while a specific explication of the Lowry model can be found in Weber (1984).

systems provided an aura of professionalism and technical proficiency that were increasingly seen as desirable attributes at this time.

The authoritative and technocratic stance of the NCC also dominated the early planning stages of the Place du Portage office building program in Hull. This is indicated when the Report states that this major planning initiative would: "...coincide with the Treasury Board revised program forecast manual and its planning, programming and budgeting system" (AR, 1968-69; 5). The invocation of the Treasury Board indicates a call to authority and the use of the term 'system' once again indicates a concern with modelling to produce the most rational and efficient outcome. Similarly, the building plan was labelled as a "...comprehensive redevelopment" (AR, 1968-69; 4) with all that these words imply in terms of Modernist era demolition and rebuilding.

This authoritative and 'expert' approach of the NCC was still dominant in 1969-70. For example, with respect to planning for more federal government activity on the Quebec portion of the NCR, the 1969-70 Report states: "The direction of activity throughout 1969-70 reflected this appreciation" (AR, 1969-70; 4). The use of the word direction not only projects an aura of power and control on the part of the NCC, but power and control responsibly wielded in the service of

noble ends. Similarly, in regard to the building height controls in the Centretown area immediately south of the parliamentary buildings, it states: "In anticipation of the problem, the Commission had for some time proposed that a study be made of the central area to determine the best development policy in the interests of both the Government of Canada in protecting the Parliament Buildings, and of the City of Ottawa in achieving a sound central business district" (AR, 1969-70; 6). The term 'in anticipation' gives the impression of knowledgeable, far-sightedness on the part of the Commission. There was no mention at all of concepts such as consensus, dialogue, and accommodation.

There were, though, changes occurring in the broader institutional planning environment at this time. Specifically, these changes were to local government structure. Throughout the 1960s the provincial and municipal planning process described earlier was increasingly seen as unsatisfactory. A closer relationship between planning and political jurisdictions was eminently desirable. In 1964 a local government review program had been initiated which aimed at producing larger municipal units with coterminous planning jurisdiction (OEC, 1973). The review recommended the creation of a regional tier of government with enhanced planning responsibilities. The territories of the regional units were

designed to constitute logical and complete planning units. Moreover, the arrangement would focus local powers and functions in the elected council rather than in elected or appointed boards or commissions (OEC, 1973). The regional tier of government was basically formed to achieve two things. First, the abolition of the local planning boards which were increasingly seen as an unnecessary complication in the planning process and, second, the devolution of provincial authority in municipal planning matters.

The Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (RMOC) was formed in 1969 as a result of this local government review program. It was, in fact, the first regional municipality created in Ontario. This new government, made up of representatives of various municipalities, was assigned boundaries similar to those of the Ontario side of the NCR (NCC, 1998).

The Quebec portion of the NCR exhibited a similar pattern of development. The ARs of the 1960s make it clear that, prior to the Place du Portage development, the NCC had conducted very little planning activity in the Quebec portion of the NCR. As a result it had been little affected by the local planning environment in Quebec. What NCC planning that

It must be pointed out, however, that Metro Toronto was conceived in a similar way in 1953.

had taken place there mainly involved the preservation of natural areas, for instance Gatineau Park, rather than infrastructural development. In 1970, the Quebec government established the Outaouais Regional Community (ORC), according it boundaries similar to the Quebec portion of the NCR. At the same time the Quebec Government set up the Société d'aménagement de l'Outaouais, with responsibility for industrial, commercial, tourism and recreational development (NCC, 1998).

Both the RMOC and the ORC had strong planning mandates which involved the preparation of Official Plans which would, at least in theory, reflect local aspirations and be democratically accountable. The municipalities could then prepare their own plans in conformity with the policies adopted at the regional level (AR, 1980-81). These developments were important because they addressed the preexisting paralysis in municipal planning at the provincial and local level. The NCC's previous dominance in local planning affairs was now contested by a professionally competent, ostensibly more democratic and locally accountable planning presence. This represented a challenge to the NCC, both in terms of its previous mode of operation, and its relevance in the planning process of the NCR. It will be seen that the imaging of the operating mode of the Commission, and

the rhetoric employed in subsequent Reports, alters to reflect this challenge to the NCC's planning dominance within the NCR.

The 1970-71 AR exhibits an abrupt change of tone from previous ARs. With respect to literary technique, the amount and intensity of rhetoric increases sharply as compared to the earlier reports. Phrases such as: "this has further underlined the importance of a co-ordinated development program for the core of the Capital area" (AR, 1970-71; 8), and: "...without the co-operation of municipal authorities in Ontario and Quebec..." (AR, 1970-71; 5) signify a change in the imaging of the NCC's planning activity - from one that lauded an authoritative and dominant stance to one that emphasized a more conciliatory and cooperative approach.

With regard to the Place du Portage rebuilding program, the projection of a more inclusive and cooperative planning stance by the NCC is suggested by this statement: "During the past year, however, the Commission has worked closely with the Quebec authorities both at the municipal and provincial levels in order to assist in the development...on the north side of the Ottawa River" (AR, 1970-71; 6). However the phrase: "Federal initiative is needed to rebuild the centre of Hull" (AR, 1970-71; 6) still implies a claim both to authority, and to effective agency, on the part of the Commission. This seems to indicate that the cooperative and conciliatory

demeanour may have been merely an exercise in re-imaging the stance of the Commission rather than indicative of a fundamental change on the part of the NCC.

The 1973-74 AR contained the first official acceptance of the fact that the NCC would have to share the planning of the NCR with regional and municipal bodies. There was also an indication of the difficulties the Commission perceived to emanate from this:

Provincial and Regional government planning in the Capital Area has changed the relative position of the federal government in its development plans. There is nothing sinister in this. It is just that the federal government previously filled the planning vacuum. Now other jurisdictions seek their place in the planning sun. This increased activity by other levels of government has required the federal authority to place increasing reliance upon persuasion and indirect strategies - through its use of federally owned lands, for instance - to implement its policies and planning objectives.... The result is a growing discrepancy between the responsibilities of the federal government and its capacity to act effectively to carry them out (AR, 1973-74; 6-7).

This quote hints at a discrepancy between the projected public stance of the Commission and its core ideology. The explicit message indicates an acceptance of the new situation - that the new limitations on the NCC's agency are legitimate. However, the term 'planning sun' suggests that the Commission still felt that good urban planning should be a smooth, centralized and predictable process, a process that is enhanced by a lack of spontaneity and disruption. Further, it

indicates the desirability of being in this 'planning sun', and that the municipal and regional governments entry into this exalted position involved the pushing aside of the Commission with a consequential loss of prestige. The last sentence makes clearer the Commission's displeasure with the contemporary situation. It also reveals a certain amount of frustration at the inability to act in its old authoritative way. It is also interesting to note that the NCC deliberately conflates itself with the federal presence in the NCR in this quote. This may indicate a claim to legitimacy and authority on the part of the Commission faced with a shifting and increasingly uncertain operating environment and a perceived loss of power and prestige.

A further indication of the problems presented by the changing planning context is provided by the same Report. It states: "But projects which appear to be on the side of angels when undertaken and even when finished may in themselves create devilish problems. For instance, did the removal of railway lines from downtown Ottawa-Hull and the consequent vast increase in the road network create an even uglier monster in the smoke and smother of traffic circulation" (AR, 1973-74; 10). The use of the terms 'angels' and 'devilish' is interesting. They suggest the invocation of super-human forces to explain newly perceived problems arising from past

NCC initiatives. This perhaps speaks to an increased uncertainty and vulnerability on the part of the Commission. The imaging of these problems in terms of 'angels' and 'devilish' allows them to be painted as, somehow, divinely imposed. This permitted the Commission to distance itself from culpability with respect to the problems caused by past initiatives which it could not be expected to either anticipate or effectively plan for.

The 1974-75 AR introduces a new 'concept for development' of the Capital to the year 2000. Entitled 'Tomorrow's Capital', the report was the result of "...reassessment, argument and consensus [which took place] on the future of Canada's Capital" (AR, 1974-75; 9). It also had the sub-title 'Invitation to Dialogue'. This "...conveyed to other authorities, provincial, regional and municipal, and the public at large, that the Commission is anxious to discuss its proposals in order to arrive at a broad consensus on policy objectives for the National Capital Region" (AR, 1974-75; 9). This consensus now includes 'ordinary' people as: "Citizens' Associations of every stripe are involving themselves in the planning business" (AR, 1974-75; 9). This demonstrates a greater grassroots' influence on planning activity. This influence forced a further modification in the Commission's imaging of its stance. Its mode of operation now had to be

seen to include a consensual dialogue with the public at large.

However, while apparently accepting the need for close collaboration with other planning jurisdictions, the NCC does attempt to carve a distinctive, and important, place for itself in the planning milieu. It states: "As the only agency with a mandate to plan for the National Capital Region as a whole, the commission has an important role to play in ensuring that its planning policies and those of the Outaouais, Ottawa-Carleton, Quebec and Ontario governments are compatible and reinforce each other" (AR, 1974-75; 16). This suggests that as these disparate municipal and regional jurisdictions, with responsibilities and agendas focussed on spatially limited portions of the NCR, became more powerful in the planning field, the potential for planning clashes within the NCR became more of a possibility. Consequently, given its region-wide vision and responsibility, the NCC sought to promote itself as the only organization with the potential to facilitate conciliation amongst the other bodies.

Announcing that 1975 was a year of re-assessment for the NCC, the 1975-76 AR reveals some of the pressures that led to the publication the report entitled 'Tomorrow's Capital', which had been introduced in the previous AR. The completion of a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of

Commons examination of the role of the Commission had "...led the NCC to take stock and put forward its view on how it believes the National Capital Region should be developed in the next quarter-century" (AR, 1975-76; 7). The result was the 'Tomorrow's Capital' report. This episode gives an indication of the pressure the Commission was under at this time. It is also clear that this pressure emanated from within the federal political establishment rather than from any grassroots protest campaign. It is little wonder, therefore, that the Commission was anxious to carve a distinct and defensible role for itself in the new planning environment.

The 1975-76 AR also provides some intimation of bad feelings between the various planning agencies in the region revealed by this statement: "It has been argued by some that only municipal authorities have the responsibility for promulgating and implementing region-wide plans in the [NCR]. The Commission holds that this view is unconstitutional" (AR, 1975-76; 9). Indeed, the 1975-76 AR adopts a very defensive tone with regard to the importance of the NCC's role in the face of a more aggressive involvement in planning on the part of the regional and municipal bodies. It promotes its organization of the major federal expenditure in the NCR and how this expenditure transcends the more parochial emphasis of

local and provincial expenditures, saying: "Provincial and municipal authorities have responsibility for local concerns in their respective jurisdictions in the region. But their responsibilities cannot be construed as representing the national interest. Neither can they be substituted for national concerns and interests" (AR, 1975-76; 9).

This rather tense situation was amplified in the interviews. A former executive vice president and general manager of the Commission stated:

...the relationship [of the NCC] with the 27 municipalities that are within the NCR...was abysmal [before 1990]. Because the NCC, for years, had taken the policy view that they were a federal Crown Corporation. Therefore they were the penultimate power in the area...because...the federal government's ranking is greater than the provincial government and much greater than the municipalities. So there [was] a tendency to just not worry about municipal bylaws, municipal rules. We'll do it and if you don't like it, municipalities, stick it in your ear (Interview 3; July, 1999).

Given this tense relationship it is perhaps not surprising that the NCC's rhetoric often reverts to a more authoritarian stance emphasizing the Commission's embeddedness within central political power structures. Phrases such as "...agent of the national government..." (AR, 1975-76; 12), "...regulated by cabinet..." (AR, 1975-76; 12) and "...responsible twice over to elected federal representatives..." (AR, 1975-76; 12) appear. This appears to

be an attempt to conflate the NCC with the federal government to increase its legitimacy and importance and provide an excuse for the overriding of municipal zoning laws.

The 1976-77 AR continues this defensive posture, implying that the municipal initiatives produce over-simplified solutions to complex problems. The report drew a line between the typical municipal planning initiative and the more sensitive approach of the NCC saying "...revitalization of core areas cannot be achieved by simply tearing down the old and constructing the new. The need is persistently voiced to find ways to preserve the character of local neighbourhoods, as well as the integrity of the environment" (AR, 1976-77; 7).

Again, the NCC specifically uses the increased planning complexity in the NCR to reinforce its necessity in the new planning environment, saying: "Far from obviating the need for a body such as the NCC, as has been occasionally suggested, the increased complexity means there is an increased need to synthesize, and on occasion provide a comprehensive and long-term perspective for a whole in which coexist so many varying needs and interests. And, of course, with this growth in complexity the need is reinforced for that which is precisely the mandate set for the NCC by Parliament" (AR, 1976-77; 9). The NCC continually emphasised its potential to act in a coordinating role, balancing the demands of the other layers

of government as well as citizens groups, industrial and commercial organizations and special interest associations. The NCC imaged itself as a body that could synthesize and reconcile numerous disparate and competing agendas, and continue to provide a broad-based and long-term perspective to planning within the NCR.

The interviews shed further light on the distinction between the policy implementation methods of the NCC and those of the regional and municipal bodies and the tensions that this created:

What local politicians do not like is that decisions are made [in private]...and...they can not go in and be an observer or try to influence the decisions of the Commissioners. And I think that is very important - that that not be able to happen. Because, as soon as you open the meetings, and as soon as you have the public be able to come to those meetings, they become like municipal counsellors - and that's what the municipal counsellors...would like because that's the world they live in. But if you are going to be making long-term decisions - and you want to get public input, no question - but, in my view, you want a relatively benign environment to ultimately make those decisions (Interview 3; July, 1999).

The making of planning decisions in a 'benign' environment illustrates the problems for the NCC during this period. The organization considered the closed door nature of its policy meetings a desirable attribute in fostering effective long-term and broad-based planning decisions. Unfortunately it also gave the impression, whether correct or not, that the

Commission was not democratically accountable. This approach went unchallenged in the Modernist era but became problematical in the Postmodern era, with the increased emphasis on the accountability and responsiveness of Public institutions.

The quote is also interesting because it hints at a superior self-image of the NCC. It paints a picture of an organization above both the petty squabbles and grandstanding of municipal politics and the shallow concerns of the general public.

The ARs continued to emphasize cooperation, consultation and sharing within the planning field during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The 1983-84 AR announces that "...the Commission can take some measure of pride in the accomplishments which it has helped to facilitate over the past 25 years" (AR, 1983-84; 5) and: "While due in part to the Commission's efforts, these accomplishments are also the result of...the cooperative spirit of municipal, regional, provincial and federal agencies with jurisdictional responsibilities in the [NCR]" (AR, 1983-84; 5). A final example is: "...the NCC looks forward to the shared challenges which lie ahead" (AR, 1983-84; 6).

One change that had occurred since the late 1970s was that this sharing now included private groups and individuals.

The Report announced that "...the NCC is looking forward to continued interest and cooperation of public agencies and groups in the [NCR], as well as Canadians at large, in the development and stewardship of a Capital worthy of Canadians" (AR, 1983-84; 6). The use of the term 'stewardship' is interesting. It projects an impression of a less domineering approach and a more humble acceptance that for all of their efforts, and for all the credit they claim for its development, the Capital would always be greater, and more long-lasting than the Commission itself. Once again, this continues the shift away from the imaging of the Commission as a dictatorial body unilaterally implementing planning decisions and towards a cooperative and consultative body with a more inclusive vision for the planning of the Capital. The NCC now seeks to be seen as being fully embedded within the larger course of planning practice within the NCR - a stance that accords well with the dynamics of Postmodernism. The Commission now presents a benign, accountable and more humble vision of itself.

The election of the federal Conservative Party in 1984 gave a further impetus to the Commission's cooperative and sharing attitude. The previous theme revealed how the election of the Conservative Party had encouraged a drive for more accountability and efficiency within government

departments and how this had involved a more critical examination and evaluation of government bodies.

It is no surprise that the rhetoric in the ARs increased in this changed political environment. The 1986-87 AR continued to place great emphasis on consultation and the sharing of planning decisions particularly with 'ordinary' Canadians. The Report announced:

...consultation and coordination have assumed central importance in all our planning and implementation strategies. We must not assume that we know best. We must encourage public input and participation as we move ahead. Closely linked to that approach is the need to extend the opportunity - in every possible case - for direct public participation and contribution (AR, 1986-87; 4, emphasis in original).

And again:

A vital part of creating both the Federal Land Use Plan and the Capital Orientation Plan has been comment and participation from other government agencies and from interested groups in the private sector.

Both plans have been modified and improved as the result of thoughtful inputs - creating a firm, consensual foundation on which to build the Capital of the future (AR, 1986-87; 4).

The rhetoric and thrust appeared aimed at entrenching the notion that the Commission is fully aware of, and accountable to, the wishes of the general public. But further, it appeared to promote the whole *modus operandi* of the NCC as being fully in accordance with, indeed, fully embedded within, more general Canadian societal values. The grandiose goal was

the "[production of] a Capital that embodies and reflects the essence of Canada" (AR, 1986-87; 4) and the launching of "...a period of renewal that will transform the Capital, in spirit and in appearance, in the not-distant future (AR, 1986-87; 8).

As was seen in the previous theme the incumbent Conservative Party struck the Nielsen Task Force in 1984. Part of the work of this task force involved an investigation of the landholdings of all Crown Corporations, with the aim of forcing the disposal of those lands that did not serve a strategic or 'national' purpose. By 1988 the impact of the NTF was being felt by the NCC. The senior director of communications explained it in this way:

...in '88 there was another federal exercise called the Nielsen Task Force review. They were looking at the rationalization of...government organizations....As part of that review they looked at the NCC and said you have acquired way too much land. Do you know for [what] purposes?...As a result...we rationalized our land ownership and clarified a concept which had always been implicit in various plans...by identifying what we call lands of national significance. The national interest land-mass. That concept was created in '88. It was approved by cabinet and it was a turning point in the NCC becoming the NCC of today. [Now there was] specific areas of responsibility versus the NCC of the past that, in fact, played the role of the RMOC, and City Hall, and the Quebec side play today - because there was a [planning] void. But no longer today and we need to rationalize. Primarily, [the lands] of national significance are Confederation Boulevard, all the canals, waterways, shorelines, parkway system, the Sussex Drive Mile of History, Gatineau Park, and the Greenbelt all around. So there was definition (Interview 2; July, 1999).

The senior director of communications explained further:

...since the late '80s when...the Nielsen Task Force told us to divest of all lands that are not of national interest - as they did [to] other federal departments. We had really done our homework as far as identifying the [purpose] of these lands when [they were] purchased, or in a lot of cases, expropriated. And it was quite clear that it was for a regional transportation corridor....So they no longer served, and in some cases never did serve, a national purpose. The Nielsen Task Force...directed [us to divest all] infrastructures and landholdings that did not serve a national purpose....Now, its a long process and owning 10% of the land in the NCR - that being one of our main functions - it obviously impacted on us more than another ministry. therefore its been a long process for us (Interview 1; July, 1999).

The NCC was able to turn a political situation that had the potential to cause them harm - by limiting their ability to effectively plan through restrictions of their land ownership - into an advantage. Their previous filling of the planning vacuum in the 1960s had resulted in them acquiring land which, in the late 1980s, was perceived as being of only local and regional significance. This land could not be identified with what was understood as 'national significance' in the period. The NCC, in consequence, had much land to divest. This put them in a strong bargaining position with the regional and municipal governments.

The identifying of lands of 'national significance' was also important because it allowed a quasi-rational method of

spatially delineating areas where the NCC could re-establish primary responsibility. These were areas where it could prosecute its planning mandate in an environment where the fear of clashes with regional or municipal planning bodies was reduced.

The senior director of communications explained how the mechanism of divestiture worked:

...we look at the Pinecrest corridor land that leads to the Ottawa River...those are nationally important, we should retain those because they are quite widely used by visitors to the Capital, they're an important link. The waterway corridors, obviously, those are untouchables. But a lot of those other corridors - the Alta Vista corridor, the eastern corridor - we looked at because visitors to the Capital do not necessarily use those. Residents do...sometimes they were retained for regional transportation purposes. So we asked the regional government if they were interested [in acquiring these lands], we asked the City if they were interested. In some cases this is where we arrived at certain agreements with the regional government - the eastern corridor is one that we did transfer to them because they still think that in the future there may be a need for a regional road there. The Alta Vista corridor, no longer a need for a regional road but the City recognised that the [adjacent] communities do use it extensively and therefore we transferred a large portion of it to the City...(Interview 1; July, 1999).

This process of land rationalization also opened the way for land exchanges between the NCC and the regional and municipal bodies. Moreover, these land exchanges could be conducted in accordance with an overarching, strategic, region-wide plan.

The regional and municipal governments could acquire land, previously held by the Commission, which they considered important for their own planning initiatives. At the same time the NCC could acquire land, previously held by the Regions and municipalities, that it considered to be of national significance. The idea was to create rational areas where the relevant planning body could prosecute their planning initiative without undue interference from other bodies.

The senior director of finance and planning gives an example of how this worked:

Another exchange [was] with the City of Ottawa whereby we transferred Mooneys Bay to them and they transferred Rockcliffe Park to us, because one was more municipal-like and the other was more Capital-like, and we did the trade. At the same time there were a number of long-term leases that we had of recreational type - cricket courts, baseball diamonds - that were better managed by the City and therefore owned by the City. So there were these kinds of pluses and minuses (interview 2; July, 1999).

It is interesting to note the 'class' differential between the two parks mentioned in the quote. the 'Capital-like' Rockcliffe Park, found within the wealthiest residential area of the NCR, has an elitist flavour, while the 'municipal-like' Mooneys Bay has a more populist feel.

This mechanism described in the quote was important in reducing tensions between the NCC and the other planning

bodies. It afforded the potential for allowing a more logical spatial separation of NCC land from regional and municipal land and, by extension, permitted the opportunity for more rational and comprehensive planning by all the planning bodies within the NCR. This acted to soothe the apparently tense relationship that existed prior to the late 1980s.

The former executive vice-president and general manager gave an insight into the internal workings of the NCC that promoted cooperation with the other planning bodies within the NCR:

I just felt that, with the lack of money - and there was going to be less and less money - was that the only way to survive, and to be able to do things both at a policy level and at a practical level, was to have partnerships and to have cooperation. So I arranged, for the first three months, to have every Chief Administrative Officer [from the municipalities] come in and meet with me. By the third one I could have repeated the same line that I was going to hear from all of them - 'you never listen, you are arrogant, you don't discuss, you don't coordinate' - and I undertook to change that.

We had the senior management team from the NCC meet with the senior management teams of each of the major municipalities. From Alymer, Hull, Gatineau, Cumberland through to Kanata - and we went out and met them in their offices. People knew names, but people actually physically met...put a face [to the name]...and we talked of how we could coordinate better.

The other feature, a very big policy issue, is that the NCC had taken a position for years that it did not have to comply with municipal bylaws - zoning bylaws in particular - they could do what they wanted to do. We made a commitment that we would abide by the municipal bylaws and follow, in Ontario, the Ontario Municipal Board

rulings...which the Treasury Board (TB) did not necessarily like because we were returning to the jurisdiction of [a]...government that was junior to the federal government, however, it was a question of realities. [But] we said: 'we will appeal to the TB if you do things that we do not like' (Interview 3; July, 1999).

The former senior planner gave an example of how this new approach manifested itself in actual planning practice:

...in the early '90s, [there was a decision] to plan jointly with the two regional governments because they were going through a planning exercise of revising their orientation plan, or master plan, for their whole region. So we could have the same type of orientations for development - there would be better integration of all planning aspects of the Capital

With major projects like Confederation Boulevard, we were very pleased when the regional government told us we have to do a major reconstruction of a sewer and widen the street. We said: OK, scrap the whole [regional] street [project], why don't we use that as the reason to redevelop and redesign the street and sidewalk and make it part of Confederation Boulevard. They said: yes, no problem - we will pay what we would have paid before, you pay...the additional amount to bring it to your design level....And at the end...we...have achieved the same thing in a shorter period, with a lot less, than we would have done originally. So it is called 'partnership'. In other words, it is partnership with governments and partnership with the private sector, too - like the development of the Daly Building on NCC land but done by the private sector (Interview 4; July, 1999).

So, in the early 1990s there was a deepening of the cooperation between the NCC and other planning bodies in the region. This now involved more than land exchanges - there was cooperation and integration in the planning mechanism of

individual projects. Further, it would appear that while the start of meaningful institutional cooperation between the NCC and the regional and municipal planning bodies had been given impetus by the political climate instituted by the Conservative government, its continuation and deepening was, at least in part, driven by the financial environment of the late 1980s and early 1990s that was explicated in Theme 1.

This theme has examined the mode of operation of the NCC from the perspective of changes in its attitude towards conciliation and cooperation with other entities within the NCR during the course of its existence. When examined closely it would appear that this relationship had three major phases.

The period from 1960 to 1970 was characterised by an authoritative and domineering approach. Further, there was little attempt to explain or conceal this approach during this period.

The second phase, from 1970 to the late 1980s, was characterised by increasing involvement of, first, other government bodies - principally through the creation of the RMOC and the ORC - and, later, citizens groups and private individuals, in the planning process. As was seen, the NCC responded to this escalating situation with a slew of rhetoric aimed at promoting itself as an accountable and cooperative body able to effectively share planning responsibility within

the NCR. This section has questioned, however, whether the NCC merely paid lip-service to these populist ideals while its core ideology remained that of an elitist planning body.

The third phase, from 1988 to the late 1990s, appeared to represent a genuine change in approach by the NCC. In this era there appeared to be true cooperation and integration of NCC planning policies with those of the regional and municipal bodies within the NCR.

While this theme has concentrated on the local and regional operating environment, connections can be made to the broader societal evolution explicated in chapter two. The Commission's elitist and authoritative mode of operation throughout the 1960s accords well with the era of Modernism. The rise of competing planning bodies in the 1970s, together with more grassroots influence on planning decisions, can be related to the Postmodern protest of Modernistic practices. Specifically, the period from 1984 onwards - with the election of the Conservative government - powerfully demonstrates the characteristics of the era of the Culture of Consumption. The calls for government departments to be more financially prudent and accountable, and to follow the tenets of 'sound' business practice were eventually heeded by the NCC.

Once again, it is difficult to find evidence for the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience. However, the

presence of 'grassroots' activity in the 1970s and 1980s, evidenced by the mentioning of 'citizens associations', hints at the general presence of the sentiments of this era.

5.3: THEME 3 - THE CHANGING ATTITUDE TOWARDS URBAN CONVIVIALITY

The third theme will investigate the evolution of the NCC's stance towards aesthetically sensitive planning projects. Chapter two explained how the planning projects of the era of Modernism faced increasing protest in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Postmodern era, born out of this protest against the 'brutal precepts of Modernism', was, in part, symbolized by urban revitalization that had a sensitivity to lived experience and residential quality of life. These planning projects often involved the preservation and/or rehabilitation of historical buildings and areas and were often termed 'heritage sensitive revitalization'. We have termed this era the 'Aestheticization of the Urban Experience'.

It is a matter of irony that the resulting aestheticized cityscape (and the urban lifestyle that it encouraged), born out of a protest to the pro-business stance of Modernism, should itself form the basis for a new round of consumption

and business practices. These practices were based on the commercial exploitation of aestheticized goods and services - whether property, culinary, artistic, antique or craft-based - and helped usher in the era of the Culture of Consumption.

It will be seen that this theme is more broad-based than the previous two. The production of a sensually pleasing city, when taken in conjunction with the capital status of Ottawa-Hull, became entwined with issues of national symbolism and revenue generation on the part of the NCC. These aspects have been fully incorporated into this theme.

It has already been ascertained that the Reports of the 1960s promoted the creation of a stark, Modernist vision for the urban core of the NCR. However, the 1960-61 AR does describe one important exception to this general pattern. There is a very early concern with restoration and conservation of historic buildings along Sussex Drive. "In the section between the Basilica and York Street, a detailed study has been prepared, showing how these buildings might be restored with, in some cases, re-built structures woven into the historic fabric" (AR, 1960-61; 27).

The Report also reveals some awareness that such historical preservation could have a beneficial effect on the adjacent Lower Town (which contains the Byward Market area) by saying "It is hoped that...these measures will be a valuable

adjunct to Lower Town and will revitalize a site which is full of historic interest but in recent years is becoming blighted" (AR, 1960-61; 27). The use of the term 'revitalize' here is interesting. As explained in chapter two, this was to become a popular term in the late 1960s and early 1970s as aesthetically sensitive redevelopments, rather than Modernist demolition and rebuilding, became more common. There appears to be an early glimmer of recognition on the part of the Commission that, in certain areas, a nurtured historicity of the cityscape could be used as an alternative to demolition and rebuilding as a way to develop faded and seedy areas of the city and address the problem of 'blighted' areas.

The 1961-62 AR makes it clear that this early interest in preserving the buildings along Sussex Drive was driven by concerns to create a suitable setting for the Canadian centennial celebrations of 1967. In this regard "Sussex Drive [was] being designed as part of the ceremonial route of the Capital joining Parliament Hill to Rideau Hall" (AR, 1961-62; 12) and was therefore visually sensitive (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1990). This makes clear that it was concern with national ceremony, which constituted an important part of the NCC's fundamental mandate, that appeared to provide the impetus for this early concern with city aesthetics. The report announces that along Sussex Drive "the sidewalks will

be widened, trees planted and some of the building facades restored in order to present a pleasant and unique environment for visitors to enjoy" (AR, 1961-62; 12). It should be noted, however, that this 'pleasant and unique environment' was designed to benefit visitors and not residents of the city. This would seem to indicate that the Commission had little explicit regard for the quality of life of the residents of the central city during this period.

Despite its limited scope and restricted spatial extent, the preservation of buildings on Sussex Drive did demonstrate an early concern with urban aesthetics on the part of the Commission. It was the NCC's concern with national signification which drove this innovative policy initiative. However, at this time, the Sussex Drive initiative was very much the exception.

A significant clue to the NCC's understanding of what a city should represent and how it should operate in this era is the use of the phrase: "...old and quaint..." (AR, 1964-65; 19) to describe the Queen Elizabeth Driveway. This scenic route, adjacent to the Rideau Canal, had been a planning initiative of the Ottawa Improvement Commission in the early years of the century. The use of the term 'quaint', while suggesting a certain charm, also has intimations of inefficiency and a certain remove from the vital matters of

the day. This would accord well with a Modernist attitude viewing a scenic, low-speed driveway extending into what should be a business oriented, fast-paced and starkly efficient urban core.

This Report does reveal other planning initiatives which involved aesthetic considerations. However, these were confined to historical preservation projects on the rural fringe area of the NCR and thus spatially removed from the requirements of a modern and efficient central city area epitomized by the illustration of the 'Civic Redevelopment Model' (Figure 2) included in Theme 1. Examples include: "Grants in aid [were provided by the NCC] to the Mill of Kintail, Canadian Arts and Pioneer Museum near Almonte and to Watson's Mill at Manotick" (AR, 1964-65; 22).

It is the 1968-69 AR that exhibits the first indications of a change of tone on the part of the NCC. While introduced in a somewhat muted manner, there is the first appearance of a more general concern with the aesthetics of the urban environment. This arose in connection to the preparation of a development plan to cover the NCR, part of which entailed: "...the planning of new communities and the enhancement of the quality of urban environment" (AR, 1968-69; 4).

Also included in the 1968-69 AR is the first indication that the Commission could, and would, use planning and

development projects to further a particular socio-political vision. The particular project in question was the redevelopment of Hull Island in the Quebec portion of the NCR. This project was intended to: "...bring about conditions of balanced social and economic development between all parts of the Capital Area" (AR, 1968-69; 4).

The redevelopment of Hull Island, better known as the Place du Portage federal office relocation program, became a major planning and development project of the Commission over the following five years. Its design and execution, which involved the demolition of much of the working-class centre of the old town of Hull and the construction of massive, austere office highrises, personify Modernist era urban planning practice. However, the project demonstrates how the Commission's planning activity had to respond to political and strategic imperatives dictated by the federal government. Additionally, the project's changing description and imaging in the ARs provides an insight into how heritage and aesthetic considerations became woven into, and partially constitutive of, the symbolic goals the NCC sought with many of its planning initiatives.

The former senior planner with the Commission describes the initiation of the Place du Portage development in this way:

In '68 there was something quite important to be built in the Capital. The NCR proper covers both sides of the Ottawa River. So there are portions in the Province of Quebec and portions in the Province of Ontario....

For many political reasons we find that the Outaouais side, the Quebec side, has not been developed the way the Ontario side has been. So that in 1968 the Prime Minister and the Prime Ministers of the provinces had a meeting in Ottawa. They declared at that time that [both] Ottawa and Hull are part of the NCR. [As a result] Mr. Trudeau...decided to initiate a major redevelopment project in the downtown core of Hull. The objective was the construction of Federal offices and relocating 25,000 employees, so...that 25% of...federal [employees] would be working on the Quebec side and 75% on the Ontario side.

It meant expropriation of lands in the downtown core of Hull [and] construction by the Department of Public Works of major federal offices right in the middle of the core. The purpose of it was also to concentrate those buildings and to try to help the development of the core by creating a major employment centre and [thus revive]...the old town of Hull.

This was quite crucial in the devolution of the Capital [to the Quebec side of the NCR]...because [previously] Ottawa was considered as the only important centre of the capital, and was also [alone] considered [to be] the Capital. But the construction of the Federal offices in Hull changed the pattern of development (Interview 4; July, 1999).

The Place du Portage development had been directed by then Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. He considered that his policy of bilingualism and multiculturalism, and associated French-English rapprochement, required a tangible and physical representation within the NCR. As a result, the Hull redevelopment had the stated aim of strengthening the

previously lacking economic and functional incorporation of the Quebec portion of the NCR into the capital apparatus.

NCC spending on the Quebec portion of the NCR was severely limited during the 1960s, and what little planning it did there usually involved the nurturing and protection of 'natural' areas. Again, the former senior planner describes this period:

The Quebec part of the Capital existed prior to '58, so it was always there. But the only efforts the federal government had made during all those decades was mainly in the development of the Gatineau Park. That started in 1954...and then in the Gréber Plan there was a recommendation to bring this park to 88,000 acres (Interview 4; July, 1999).

By addressing this imbalance between the Ontario and Quebec portions of the NCR and creating a stronger functional integration, the NCC sought to symbolize Quebec's embeddedness within the Canadian federation. The final goal, made clear in subsequent Reports, was the promotion and nurturing national unity.

The symbolic aspects of the Place du Portage development is made clearer in the 1969-70 AR, where the program had an elevated profile. It was now a "...major objective...given increasing emphasis" (AR, 1969-70; 4). Referring to a recently published report entitled Central Area Study, 1969, the AR states: "[The report] also made concrete proposals for a direct link between the central parts of Hull and Ottawa by

way of a bridge and other structures in an attempt to create a visual and functional unity symbolizing the National Capital" (AR, 1969-70; 6).

Turning to more general factors, the 1970-71 AR exhibits a fundamental change of tone. This Report further defines the objectives of the NCC in developing the NCR as "an efficient and aesthetically satisfying place in which to carry on the Nation's business" (AR, 1970-71; 1). There is also the fairly sudden appearance of concerns with the general quality of life in the Capital. Moreover, there is acknowledgement of some of the urban problems created by burgeoning suburban development, which was intimately associated with the Modernistic development of cities, to which "...the deterioration in the quality of urban life in North America is testimony" (AR, 1970-71; 5). Suburban growth, generally described by the more inflammatory term of 'urban sprawl' at this time, was increasingly being viewed as a phenomenon which was draining the life out of central cities. In this vein it is interesting to note that the Greenbelt, the establishment of which was one of the priorities of the Gréber Plan, now was given an elevated profile because of its potential to limit this urban sprawl and encourage a "...more dense...core" (AR, 1970-71; 5).

The 1971-72 AR portrays the Place du Portage federal office building program in Hull as helping to create a "unified and lively core for the Capital" (AR, 1971-72; 9). Therefore, to the physical and symbolic incorporation of Hull into the NCR can be added aesthetic considerations - the creation of a lively core - of the built fabric. The term 'lively' signifies a concern with urban aesthetics and lived experience. This incorporation of aspects of urban conviviality in the Place du Portage development presaged a more general strategic utilization of aesthetic considerations to help attain symbolic objectives in NCC initiatives.

The term 'heritage' is mentioned for the first time in this Report. A whole page is devoted to the subject and it describes heritage issues solely in terms of the "...attempt to save and preserve old and unique buildings...in the NCR..." (1971-72 AR; 35). Heritage issues were to constitute an important facet of aesthetically sensitive redevelopment initiatives on the part of the NCC and would receive an escalating profile in subsequent Reports. However, as will be seen, the invocation and utilization of 'heritage' is inherently problematical.

The connection between the nurturing of national unity and the promotion of a more aesthetically pleasing urban fabric is made clearer by this quote in the 1972-73 AR:

The Capital, almost as much as the flag, perhaps, is the symbol of the country as a whole. Symbols are important, as the agonizing over their choice illustrates. The Capital is a symbol that reflects the Nation not only to the foreigner but to the resident as well and, perhaps even more important, embodies the ideal of what we would like the nation to be. One million Canadians visit their Capital every year, not to do business with the government but to see and feel (AR, 1972-73; 10 - emphasis added).

It would appear that as far as the NCC was concerned, the creation of a sensually pleasing city had become a vital ingredient in the successful promotion of national unity. Thus the aesthetic planning of the urban fabric was given a very important impetus. Canadians' pride in their capital was seen as important in fostering national unity, and this pride was to be engendered, in part, by improving the quality of life within the NCR.

This concern with the quality of life focussed particularly on the core area. Indeed, by 1972-73 the NCC was "...bending its main effort to this core reconstruction" (AR, 1972-73; 17). This is in contrast to earlier Reports in which, as has been noted, those few planning initiatives which involved aesthetic concerns were largely confined to historical preservation projects on the rural fringe area of the NCR.

An increasing concern with city aesthetics is also hinted at with respect to the Hull rebuilding program. As has been

mentioned, the development had a strongly Modernist appearance, with the construction of stark highrise offices completely out of scale with the surrounding buildings of 'old Hull'. Figure 4 illustrates the scale discrepancy of the completed Place du Portage development and its immediate surroundings in Hull. The 1972-73 AR states: "The fourth stage will complete the federal development [in Hull] on the 15 acre site in 1977. Design for this phase has not been determined but the original plan has been scaled down to avoid overpowering massiveness" (AR, 1972-73; 18). This seems to indicate that the original building program, by virtue of its scale, was now being viewed as detrimental to the quality of the living experience, and was increasingly seen as being at odds with evolving notions of urban lived experience and conviviality.

The former senior planner explained the reasons for the stark and massive appearance of the development in this way:

...so this area of land was expropriated in the downtown core of Hull...and this constituted the whole redevelopment of Hull at a [high] density....Instead of having a low development using more space and affecting more people and more housing [it was decided] there was [to be] a [greater] concentration...so the decision was to concentrate the development instead of trying to reduce the height of the buildings....It is out of scale [with its surroundings], but are we building a centre of Hull for today, or for tomorrow? In may take 30 years, 40 years, 50 years before there is other kinds of development there which will

Figure 4: The Completed Place Du Portage Development And It's Surroundings.

Source: NCC Annual Report, 1976-77.

blend with the scale of the Hull project (Interview 4; July, 1999).

The 1973-74 AR provides an example of how the Commission's stance had altered with respect to aesthetic considerations of the urban fabric with its description of the Queen Elizabeth Driveway. Far from describing it in the rather patronizing way as 'old and quaint' as it had in the past, it is now described as "one of the finest" (AR, 1973-74; 10) Driveways in the NCR.

The 1973-74 AR has a whole section under the heading of Heritage. This section contains the first mention of the development of the courtyards behind the buildings fronting Sussex Drive - saying that the revitalization of the Tin House Court would produce a "...charming old courtyard [that] will become one of the jewels of historic Sussex Drive" (AR, 1973-74; 32). This quote provides an example of the dramatically increased profile that aesthetic considerations were receiving in NCC planning policies. Further, the phrase 'charming old courtyard' indicates the importance of heritage issues involving historical preservation and re-creation in fostering this aesthetic appeal.

A new 'concept for development' of the Capital to the year 2000 was introduced in the 1974-75 AR. Entitled 'Tomorrow's Capital', this concept gave greater prominence to

the previously mentioned objective of the creation of a lively, revitalized core in which people can live as well as work. It is interesting to note that there is now emphasis on people living as well as working in the core area. The concern with the creation of a 'dense and lively' core was not predicated on the construction of a "monolithic town centre" (AR, 1974-75; 18). Now the requirement appeared to be for an aesthetically pleasing revitalization.

Moreover, within this Core revitalization program the Ottawa River "...will become the cohesive focus...rather than a dividing factor - a veritable lake between the Portage and Alexandria Bridges." (AR, 1974-75; 19). The incorporation of downtown waterfronts for their aesthetic amenity is very characteristic of the Postmodern development of many Western cities. This factor is given a particular twist in this context, however. The new-found aesthetic appreciation of the Ottawa River is utilized to re-image it as a 'cohesive focus' rather than a 'dividing factor'. Again this illustrates how the Commission incorporated aesthetic considerations into its symbolic nurturing of national unity.

Interestingly, the report includes criticism of fairly recent developments undertaken by other public and private bodies. It reports: "... the area south of Parliament Hill with its Sparks Street mall, commerce, new hotels and

concentration of federal employment has tended to become overbuilt and crowded" (AR 1974-75; 18-19). Moreover, it contends that the development of heritage properties on Sussex Drive and revitalization of the old Byward Market area will oppose a previous decline brought on, in part, by the siphoning of development funds to this 'overbuilt and crowded' area south of Parliament Hill. It also indicates that the Commission was starting to view the small scale, historically sensitive revitalization of the Byward Market/Sussex Drive area as a spatially distinct and successful counterpoint to the massive, Modernist development south of Parliament Hill.

Returning to the Place du Portage redevelopment, an interesting inclusion in this Report is an illustration of a model of phases i and ii of the development (reproduced in Figure 5). The illustration is notable for the rather clumsy inclusion of aesthetically pleasing details seemingly tacked onto what is overwhelmingly a stark and massive Modernist scene. The caption announces that: "The reflecting pool for summertime will provide ice skating before Christmas" (AR, 1974-75; 17 - caption). In this regard the text also highlights these minor aesthetic embellishments stating: "On the surface in summer, shade trees carefully preserved, fountains and a large reflecting pool will provide relief from summer's heat" (AR, 1974-75; 26). Moreover, there is more

Figure 5: The "Reflecting Pool" Within The Place Du Portage Development

Source: NCC Annual Report, 1974-75.

emphasis on the provision of public space. This reference to aesthetic amenity sits rather uncomfortably with the starkly Modernist flavour which imbues the vast majority of the project. This may indicate a certain tension between the evolving ideology of the NCC and this particular planning project. The Hull office building program, conceived in the Modernist era, and responding to the values of that era, apparently, could not be materially altered to suit the new tenor of the Postmodern era. As a result, the NCC attempted a subtle re-imaging of the project, with small aestheticized embellishments being disproportionately promoted.

The 1976-77 AR continues the theme of the desirability of aesthetically sensitive revitalization. This Report drew a line between what it considered the typical municipal planning initiative and the more sensitive approach of the NCC saying "...revitalization of core areas cannot be achieved by simply tearing down the old and constructing the new. The need is persistently voiced to find ways to preserve the character of local neighbourhoods, as well as the integrity of the environment" (AR, 1976-77; 7). The Report adds that, within its historic preservation and restoration program, NCC planning "...activities on the Ontario side of the National Capital Region were primarily located in the Sussex Drive/Market area" (AR, 1976-77; 27). This included the

reconstruction of the Castor House for commercial and apartment use and the rehabilitation of the stone building in Clarendon Court, as well as further development of the pedestrian courtyards and walkway system in the block between George and York streets.

The 1978-79 AR gives the first indication of the Commission's involvement in the organization of festival and events. This involvement was to become an important theme in future Reports. It is interesting to note that from the very beginning of its association with festival and event organization, the NCC realized that these 'public activities' could be utilized to promote and augment deeper political agendas. The Report states: "Increasingly it is believed that the regional and urban planning of the Capital must respect and further improve its bilingual and bicultural characteristics, while at the same time encouraging and stimulating the activities and events which enhance the social and cultural character of the [NCR]" (AR, 1978-79; 14).

The importance that the Commission attached to the organization of activities is demonstrated by the fact that a whole section of the 1978-79 AR is devoted to 'Public Activities'. The nationalistic political agenda behind this is made clear by this quote:

The pride of Canadians in their Capital and its accessibility to visitors is a primary

preoccupation of the Commission. In addition to receiving and acting as guide to visitors, the NCC attempts to provide opportunities for the public to experience the national heritage which this region represents. Public activities and festivals are one means of extending such participation. Thus, in order to ensure a better understanding of the Capital, the NCC arranges a variety of public activities and travelling exhibitions (AR, 1978-79; 29).

The NCC appeared to realize that the promotion of suitable events, combined with the significance of Ottawa-Hull as the nation's capital, could be used to foster a sense of pride amongst Canadians in their Capital. This pride would help to foster a deeper sense of Canadian nationalism. This, in turn, could help preserve national unity. With the reduction in strategic infrastructural development, signified by the completion of the Place du Portage development in Hull, national unity had to be fostered in new ways. Public activities provided a reasonably straight-forward, easily accomplished and cost-effective means of approaching this. Specific initiatives undertaken by the Commission in this regard included the opening of a visitors centre, organization of walking tours, interpretation programs and involvement in a number of major festivals including the Spring Festival, Winterlude and Canada Day. It is interesting to note that Clarendon Court, part of the Sussex Drive heritage-sensitive

revitalization project, provided a venue for "...outdoor concerts by various ethnic groups..." (AR, 1978-79; 34).

The former senior planner describes the change in priority from infrastructural building towards public activity organization in this way:

...the period from '68 [to] '79 had been associated with a lot of physical projects....In 1979 we looked at what we had achieved and, sure, it was great to have all these physical projects developed, but this was not enough to develop what I would call the symbolic capital....The NCC decided at that time to create a special branch which was called the Public Activities Branch, and I was asked to become the head of that branch. The purpose of it, and this is how it fitted into the mandate of the Commission, was to develop those special symbolic aspects. I had to...create events, create reasons for Canadians [to visit] their capital. So I started developing a special events squad....Winterlude, which is a major winter festival on the canal which now brings thousands and thousands of Canadians and visitors from abroad who come here and have a chance to discover what winter is in Canada and how we enjoy winter [was one result].

[Before] people were saying 'Ottawa is the duller place. Nobody wants to go there, nobody wants to visit the capital because there is nothing or they don't feel welcome'. So we started developing better visitor services, information centres, so that people could know more about the capital - what to see, what to do, what to discover (Interview 4; July, 1999).

This passage reveals that symbolism was becoming increasingly important to the Commission's mode of operation and was intimately associated with the Commission's reorientation to the promotion of public activities. In this

context, aesthetically sensitive revitalization of the cityscape, and the associated promotion of heritage issues, would become more than a pleasing backdrop to these public activities and events. They were woven into, and became partially constitutive of, the impact and meaning of many of these activities.

The 1979-80 AR adopts a self-congratulatory tone in the account of the revitalization of the Byward Market. With some justification it states: "The NCC's mile of history heritage reconstruction of Sussex Drive has been an important factor in the revitalization of the Byward Market area which is transforming... [it] into one of the more exciting parts of the city" (AR, 1979-80; 21).

The strategic use of symbolism to promote patriotic feelings is again made clear in the 1981-82 AR, when it opens with: "National capitals are expected by citizens and visitors alike to reflect the unique qualities of their country, to show both the diversity and unity of their land. It is a very special mandate, and in some ways Canada's National Capital Region does this better than most" (AR, 1981-82; 6) and: "...using its very special mandate the [NCC] is working for the future to make the [NCR] of Canada more attractive, as a place to live, to work, and to visit, a symbol of the Canadian

character and a source of national pride to Canadians from coast to coast" (AR, 1981-82; 3).

The Byward Market area again gets a specific mention in this Report, having undergone "streetscaping" (AR, 1981-82; 21). Also, further improvements were announced to Sussex Drive. Interestingly, it was the private sector development of 11 York, 17 York and 24 Clarence (involving office-based commercial activity on the ground floor and residential accommodation on the upper floors) which was trumpeted in this regard, as was the involvement of the City of Ottawa in the development of 35 George.

Of note also, is the increasing realization of the potential for aesthetic amenity afforded by waterways in urban settings. The Report states: "The wealth of waterways in the [NCR] gives the area aquatic playgrounds few inland cities can match" (AR, 1981-82; 6). The term 'playground' is very telling. Once again, it speaks to a change in understanding of the Capital on the part of the NCC - from an austere, efficient business orientation during the 1960s to a textured, sensually pleasing environment where the emphasis is more on livability and enjoyment. It also suggests the importance of recreation in attracting visitors to the NCR and augments the impression of the Capital as a place of joy and fun - an urban area attractive to leisured visitors and residents.

The 1982-83 AR vividly demonstrates that the concept of heritage meant more to the Commission than the creation and preservation of an historical and sensually pleasing cityscape. There was a politicised and strategic aspect incorporated with the use of the concept of heritage on the part of the NCC. The Report announced: "Heritage, which constitutes an important development of a young country, is shown to advantage in the National Capital Region, particularly in the area containing the Byward Market, where the NCC has been engaged in an ongoing programme of repair and restoration" (AR, 1982-83; 7).

The utilization of the concept of heritage for patriotic purposes is extremely widespread and inherently problematical. For a detailed discussion of both general issues surrounding the strategic use of heritage and specific examples see Tunbridge and Ashworth (1995). Additionally, historical perspectives on heritage problems are provided by Slater (1996) and Jacob (1994), while more geographically specific examples are provided by Nelson and Marsh (1996) and Freestone (1993).

It appeared that the NCC sought to nurture national unity through the invocation and embellishment of a sanitised common history of Canada. This common history, revealed and interpreted through historical rehabilitation projects, was

intended to add depth to the Canadian experience and a sense of belonging to all Canadians. However, this common understanding involved a singular and specific perspective on Canadian history and disavowed any competing interpretations, particularly those that would reveal and exploit fault lines within the multi-ethnic Canadian society.

The 1983-84 AR announced that the Byward Market\Sussex Drive area now falls within the remit of a new 'Master Development Plan'. This made official that aesthetically pleasing and historically sensitive revitalization within the NCR would focus on the Byward Market area. The Master Development Plan included more residential accommodation, commercial and office space in the 'historic Market area'. This indicated that the profile of the Byward Market area continued to increase but now there was a greater emphasis placed on promoting commercial activity there.

The 1984-85 AR makes official the NCC's shift in emphasis from infrastructural development to festival event promotion by saying: "As the physical dimension of the Capital has matured and its infrastructure put in place, there is now a natural shift in emphasis toward the provision of meaningful attractions, activities and services for the ever growing number of visitors" (AR, 1984-85; 4).

This Report adds a new theme to the commercial profile of the aestheticized cityscape. The NCC's role in 'setting the stage' for developments initiated by other levels of government and the private sector is trumpeted by the announcement that in response to "...the Commission's past accomplishments in creating pleasant and functional infrastructures and its efforts towards both animating and 'beautifying' the Capital, the private sector has responded to the increased demand for facilities by enhancing the Capital with new shopping areas, fine restaurants and the ingredients necessary for a pleasant and stimulating nightlife" (AR, 1984-85; 15). This makes clear the dawning of the realization on the part of the Commission that an aesthetically pleasing urban milieu can be directly utilized to nurture, support and facilitate private sector business activity. This capacity was particularly enhanced, and became particularly important, in an environment of public activity and event promotion aimed at attracting visitors to the Capital. Further, the past actions of the NCC in creating this sensually pleasing cityscape could be invoked to defend the credibility and importance of the Commission.

The 1986-87 AR announced a new mandate for the NCC. This one had three central themes - the Capital as Canada's meeting place; communicating Canada to Canadians; and safeguarding and

preserving the Capital's natural and built environments. This new mandate further crystallized and made official the move away from infrastructural development and towards event management that had been obvious in the immediately preceding reports. Greater emphasis was placed on developing the Capital as a symbol of pride for Canadians by giving "...added emphasis to people and culture -the heart of our nation's identity" (AR, 1986-87; 1).

More specifically, the new mandate aimed at adding 'symbolic content' to the Capital. To effect this, a new Plan was initiated - the Capital Orientation Plan. This was intended to be "...a large-scale, multi-year plan in the field of cultural development" (AR, 1986-87; 1) primarily concerned "...with the events and activities that animate the Capital" (AR, 1986-87; 4). While much of this was simply making official a change that had occurred some years before, some new nuances were revealed. There appeared to be a deeper politicization in the Commission's utilization of symbolism, with the assumption that Canadian culture could be communicated to Canadians through their Capital.

The 1988-89 AR entrenched the three central themes introduced in the 1986-87 AR (The Capital as Canada's Meeting Place; Communicating Canada to Canadians; and Safeguarding and Preserving the Capital's Natural and Built Environments) by

dividing the Report into sections in accordance with these categories.

The section devoted to the Capital as Canada's meeting place includes an account of the Capital Orientation Plan. This plan is promoted as "...help[ing] to make the Capital an irresistible destination - a meeting place with heart" (AR, 1988-89; 6).

It is perhaps the section in this Report on 'Communicating Canada to Canadians' where the deeper political agenda of many of the NCC policies is made clearest. The Report announces:

There are two sides of Communicating Canada to Canadians. The first is to interpret Canada for Canadians, through events, exhibits and encounters that capture the Canadian experience. The second is to reach out, enabling Canadians everywhere to share in the life of their Capital (AR, 1988-89; 10)

And again: "The NCC has taken the lead in organizing a conference to be held in the Capital in October, 1989. An exercise in nation building..." (AR, 1988-89; 10). The notion of utilizing the Capital as a vehicle for symbolically interpreting Canada to Canadians was clearly aimed at fostering national unity. The Commission was following an agenda of nation-building.

The 1988-89 AR also displays grandiose rhetoric to highlight the symbolic potential of the Capital. This quote gives a flavour of the rhetoric employed:

Canadians, throughout our country's brief history, have been modest about celebrating accomplishments. Perhaps that's why we are only now beginning to search for a symbol - a national destination - to exemplify our character.

Such a symbol does exist. It's our *Capital*.

Canadians have quietly built a capital city unlike any other. Lively. Multicultural. A verdant oasis. The National Capital Region reflects the vibrancy, the diverse capabilities, the good will, and the values that define who we are.

...In a few kilometres, spectacular museums, revered national memorials, colourful festivals, stunning architecture, respected political institutions, and a scenic physical setting create a deeply moving impression of our accomplished nation.

...Because it has captured the spirit of our national character, the Capital is a must-see destination (AR, 1988-89; 4, emphasis in original).

Much can be gleaned from the semantics employed in this quote. First, it demonstrates that the imaging of the Capital as a symbol of the wider Canada had become firmly established as a Commission priority.

Second, the expression 'our country's brief history' hints at a perception on the part of the Commission of the fragility of the Canadian federation. But this is a fragility born of 'natural' problems associated with a childlike vulnerability - where 'national' institutions have simply not had time to grow and strengthen - rather than from any more

deep-seated and pervasive problems associated with history, geography or multi-ethnic composition. When imaged in this way, the presence of more deep-seated problems is disavowed and the perception of the existence of the Canadian federation as being somehow natural and pre-ordained is strengthened. In this manufactured milieu the solutions to Canada's unity problems could rightly be sought through the nurturing of national institutions. Further, the general perception of the validity, legitimacy and veracity of these policies is increased and as a consequence a beneficial glow is cast over the Commission. The symbolic representation of the Capital formed one strand in this overall policy.

A third theme revealed by the quote is the reinforcement and promotion of a Canadian national character that is self-effacing and unassuming. Expressions such as: 'modest about celebrating accomplishments' and 'quietly built a capital city' illustrate the point. Yet this character was to be symbolically represented by a Capital that was 'lively' and had 'vibrancy'. This contradiction points to a wider tension occasioned by the more general promotion of the Canadian 'unity in diversity' theme. The NCC claims that these 'diverse capabilities' and 'multicultural' characteristics can be neatly, symbolically represented by a Capital that 'defines who we are' and 'has captured the spirit of our

national character'. This is inherently problematical since a diverse and multicultural nation is unlikely to have a single 'spirit' of national character to represent. So what will be symbolized is likely to be the NCC's interpretation of this national character - their particular rendition of what it means to be Canadian. The Commission appears to assume that it has a monopoly on the correct interpretation of Canadianism, and that it has the incontestable right to promote this view through its actions and initiatives. There appears to be no acknowledgement, or even awareness, of contrary or opposing views of what the 'essence' of Canada may be. The NCC's stance in this regard was particularly problematical at this time because of the growing profile of First Nations in Canadian life over this period. It is interesting to note that while the challenges posed by the immigration of disparate people into Canada are embraced, no mention is made of Native issues in any of the ARs throughout the late 1980s and 1990s.

The 1988-89 AR gives a further indications of the problems involved in incorporating 'heritage' issues into the symbolic imaging of the Capital. This is best illustrated in

For a broad and thoughtful explication of the issues surrounding First Nations presence within modern Canadian society see Kariya (1989). For an overview of the history of Native-'White' relationships within Canada see Krech (1994).

the section entitled 'Preserving Our Heritage', where the built environment is termed the "Civilized Environment" (AR, 1988-89; 6). The invocation of 'heritage' entails a supposition of what, or whose, particular heritage is promoted. In the context of the promotion of a particular heritage the term 'civilized environment' becomes loaded. It has intimations of the assumption of the superiority of a particular heritage with respect to producing a 'civilized' urban milieu.

The NCC's symbolic utilization of the Capital as a vehicle to interpret Canada to Canadians, and the weaving in of particular heritage considerations to bolster this image, was fraught with ideological problems. While symbolism had been incorporated within NCC policies for many years, for example the Place du Portage redevelopment program symbolizing Quebec's embeddedness in the Canadian federation, the idea of utilizing the Capital as a representation of the wider Canada presented particular difficulties. Symbolism of this scope is inherently problematic in a multifaceted society because of the potential for competing interpretations - the fact that a particular event, structure or area can mean different things to different people. An example of this is provided by Victoria Island on the Ottawa River within the NCR. In the early 1990s, the 'white' Canadian interpretation of the island

was as an industrial heritage area with potential for commercial exploitation as a tourist site. This was at odds with the competing interpretation of many First Nations people who viewed the island as a place of historical significance for Native people. The situation led to confrontation and occupation of the site by First Nation groups.

For symbolism to be effective there must be a prior assumption of, and agreement upon, what a particular event means. This agreement in turn requires the promotion of a particular 'world view' - the fomenting of an ideology that can be agreed upon by the majority of the population.

It comes as no surprise that the 1989-90 AR continues the theme of promoting the symbolic role of the Capital saying:

Among...[the]...evocative symbols of our nationhood the one that is often underplayed is that of our National Capital. It is true, however, that no matter where we happen to live, a bit of our identity is tied to the Capital we share in common. That is because the Capital meets several fundamental needs. It provides a showcase for our values and accomplishments. It serves as a neutral meeting place for Canadians from every corner of this vast land. And it serves as a constant reminder of what we are - and are becoming. Developing our Capital to serve those ends with ever greater effectiveness is a challenge that has already been embraced by governments, philanthropic organizations, service groups, corporations and thousands of individual citizens. It is an endeavour that will grow in scope as the rewards of building the Capital we truly share in common become fully evident (AR, 1989-90; 2).

Once again, the national symbolic significance of the Capital is trumpeted. The phrase 'serves as a neutral meeting place' is significant. This hints at the perception, on the part of the Commission, of problems with using the Capital to symbolize 'our values and accomplishments'. The fact that a neutral meeting place was necessary implied, at the very least, that there was a certain tension between different groups in the Canadian 'family'.

While still dividing the Report into the same three sections as the previous Report, it is interesting that the order of presentation has changed. It starts with the 'Safeguarding of Heritage' and finishes with 'Communicating Canada to Canadians'. Again the 'Green' image of the Capital is touted saying that the natural resources:

...provide the foundation and context for the physical development and cultural animation of the Capital.

Exceptional locations for the staging of events and activities, they embody and project the "green" image that has become synonymous with our Capital and with an important dimension of the Canadian experience (AR, 1989-90; 4).

As can be seen, the 'green' image is utilized in such a way as to constitute part of the essence of Canada, to comprise part of the Canadian milieu. The imaging of Canada as 'green' is not confined to the NCC. It promotes an impression of pristine countryside and natural abundance that is utilized to confer notions of purity and wholesomeness to the country as

a whole. As such it is important in creating and bolstering a positive 'national image'.

In the Report's section on Communicating Canada to Canadians the theme of respecting and promoting the multi-faceted nature of Canadian society is continued:

Beyond Canada's core identity are many identities distinctive to particular regions or groups. This focus on our identity as the sum of our defining characteristics reflects a popular perspective: "The Canadian identity is the Canadian people themselves. It is the sum total of their varied experiences".

It is a mission of the NCC to ensure that these qualities, collective and individual, are fostered, honoured and shared by all Canadians through the vehicle of their Capital (AR, 1989-90; 16).

The stress has shifted from concerns of biculturalism and bilingualism involving French/English rapprochement to a multicultural emphasis. This is an important point; while Canadians of ethnic minority status had been included in the Reports for many years, what had previously been highlighted was their distinctiveness and their ability to add colour, excitement, and a certain exotic appeal to various spectacles and events that 'animated' the Capital. Now what was being promoted was their full embeddedness within, partial constitution of, and influence upon the identity of the larger Canadian society. In this vein, the Report includes photographs of young, happy Canadians of all ethnic backgrounds sharing activities in and around the Capital.

The shift from French-English rapprochement to concerns with multiculturalism is made clearer in the 1993-94 Report. It also indicates the NCC's perception of the magnitude of the change in societal attitudes. It contends:

Canada in the 1990s is in many ways a new country, and many of the changes - such as the rise in regionalism, multiculturalism and economic retrenchment - are certain to affect some programs sponsored by the NCC: for example, immigration has resulted in a cosmopolitan culture in Canada, which it is now the Capital's role to reflect through contemporary symbols. Also, budget restraints and the reshaping of Canadian social programs are affecting both the way governments operate and the way Canadians live. The NCC must adjust to these new realities (AR, 1993-94; 5).

In this 'new country' the NCC placed increased stress upon instilling Canadian pride in the Capital. This was pursued through three main strategies: "1) through creating and maintaining a meaningful Capital; 2) through relevant programming; and 3) through national marketing" (AR, 1993-94; 6).

This theme has gone beyond a straight-forward account of the evolution of aesthetically sensitive planning on the part of the NCC. It has done so because sensually pleasing revitalization within the NCR not only reflected and responded to the broader capitalist urban evolution described in chapter two but was also commingled with many important aspects of Canadian national, political, social and economic life.

The planning intentions of the NCC appear to mirror the broader changes in urban development revealed in chapter two. The eras of Modernism, Aestheticization of the Urban Experience, and the Culture of Consumption are well illustrated. But other issues surround the production of an aesthetically pleasing urban cityscape within the NCR. As has been seen, aesthetic considerations were strategically used by the NCC to both foster national unity and to stimulate revenue generation.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The basic intent of this thesis has been to investigate whether the stance and mode of operation of the NCC over the course of its existence evolved in accordance with the broader cultural and political dynamics of urban evolution.

The work has concentrated on changes to urban planning during the study period. There are two obvious reasons for this. First, the NCC is fundamentally an urban planning body and therefore it seems logical to set the investigation of its mode of operation against the broader evolution of Western urban planning activity. Second, urban planning provides the mechanism, or conduit, by which societal imperatives become reflected in the urban milieu. In consequence, built structures and planning for particular activities should provide evidence of the presence of deeper forces within

society. While this is more apparent when planning involves concrete, physical developments, it is no less the case when planning activity is aimed at encouraging particular human activities or emotions. The NCC's evolution from an organization centrally involved in infra-structural development to one more oriented to promoting events and activities means that this aspect of planning had to be embraced in this work.

As was seen, a review of the academic literature concerning post-war capitalist urban development suggested the presence of three broad eras. The first era was termed 'Modernism' and was dominant in the 1950s and 1960s. Modernism was characterized by a society operating along technocratic and pro-business lines the imperatives of which tended to produce an urban fabric which was austere, massive and possessed a 'symbolic poverty'. The second era was termed 'The Aestheticization of the Urban Experience'. To a large extent, this era was born out of a grass-roots protest to the urban manifestations of Modernism in the late 1960s and 1970s. The Aestheticization of the Urban Experience was imbued with the flavour of the 'counter culture' and possessed a more socially progressive agenda. It was concerned with the production of a richer and more sensually pleasing urban milieu. The final era was termed the 'Culture of

Consumption'. This era encompassed the socio-political changes of the 1980s which are often termed neo-conservatism. While this was a multi-faceted development, involving a broad attack on the 'welfare state' and the (perceived) high taxes required to sustain it, this work has concentrated on one aspect that is particularly germane to the role of the NCC - the commercial exploitation of the desire for sensually pleasing objects and experiences. These were the very desires that had, in large measure, been created and refined in the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience.

In order to make the investigation of the Commission's evolving mode of operation a manageable task, three themes were developed. These themes were the economic environment, the relationship of the NCC to other planning bodies within the NCR, and THE NCC's contribution towards, and strategic utilization of, the production of an aesthetically pleasing urban milieu.

The economic theme elucidated the changing financial environment in which the NCC had to operate. The money made available to the Commission from the Treasury Board illustrated two major dynamics. First, it provided a broad indication of the financial health of the country and the presence of economic booms and retrenchments. Second, and more importantly, the financing of the Commission became an

increasingly politicized activity during the study period. This was particularly pronounced in the neo-conservative political environment of the mid 1980s onwards. The spending potential of the Commission, therefore, in part, acted as a gauge of the more general political and social attitude - and by extension federal government policy - towards the financing of centralized Public institutions within Canada. As has been seen, the public attitude towards the financing of Public bodies changed dramatically - from encouragement, or at least acceptance, in the era of Modernism, to protest and limitation in the era of the Culture of Consumption. This theme, therefore, provided a valuable perspective on the change of stance of the Commission and its relationship to broader societal change.

The second theme examined the attitude of the Commission towards other planning bodies within the NCR. As the federal presence in the NCR, the Commission could be seen as the embodiment of centralized power. Its relationship with other bodies, from dominance and discounting in the 1960s through to genuine cooperation and coordination in the 1990s, can be seen as the Commission's response to changing societal attitudes and expectations with respect to centralized Public bodies. It also provides a perspective on the diffusion of expertise and the democratization of knowledge during the course of the

study period. Centralized power went largely unopposed during the era of Modernism, but was increasingly challenged during the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience and the Culture of Consumption. Both the latter two eras embraced calls for more public accountability and local influence - though for very different reasons - on decision making processes.

This theme also revealed that there was an interim period through much of the 1970s and 1980s where the Commission's public stance of welcoming cooperation with other planning bodies clashed with its core ideology which appeared to remain that of an elitist, technocratic and centralized planning body operating in a Modernist manner.

The third theme was more specific, and perhaps revealed most about the politicization of, and the incorporation of a larger strategy within, NCC activity. The Commission's evolving stance towards aesthetically sensitive planning initiatives was very revealing. First, the transition in emphasis from stark, functional and massive infrastructural development, involving demolition and clearance, in the 1960s and early 1970s, to revitalization projects with a greater sensitivity to conviviality and lived experience in the mid 1970s and 1980s accords well with the change from Modernism to the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience.

The Commission's change in emphasis to public activity planning and promotion in the early 1980s also accorded well with the era of the Aestheticization of the Urban Experience and the associated greater emphasis on urban centres as 'people places'. However, national political goals and deeper strategic purposes were always infused into these activities. At base, the sense of joy created in individuals who partake in festivals and events was utilized to impart a sense of pride in Canada and, by extension, to foster national unity.

The planning for festivals and events also demonstrated a change in the Commission's mode of operation. The utilization of these activities to promote both direct and indirect commercial activity, and therefore revenue generation, became increasingly important during the 1980s. As previously described, this commercial exploitation of sensually pleasing events and experiences powerfully illustrates a central facet of the Culture of Consumption. In this respect, the findings of this theme reinforce the results of the first theme.

This theme was also interesting, however, for the way the deconstruction of both the ARs and the interview material revealed details of the deeper strategies that lay behind many of the policy initiatives of the NCC. In particular, the individual communicative components that formed the strands of

a more general promotion of national unity were revealed and the details of the NCC's nation-building agenda were clarified.

While each theme was designed to illustrate a different facet of the NCC's evolving mode of operation, they are not intended to be studied in isolation from one another. When combined, the three themes powerfully suggest that the mode of operation of the NCC did alter in conformity to the broader societal changes revealed in chapter two.

It must be noted that the investigation was impacted by two interconnected difficulties. The first problem concerned the nature of societal change. Societal evolution, and its urban manifestations, is not characterized by abrupt, spatially extensive change from one broad era to the next. Societal change during the study period tended to progress erratically, often given impetus by particular events or actions that may have been meaningful to one group, or to one area, but not to others. Thus, societal evolution tended to progress in a series of spurts and to be characterized by both social and spatial fragmentation and overlap. In consequence, the evidence for the presence of a particular era in one area may be contradicted by evidence emanating from another area. Indeed, contradictory evidence could often be gleaned from urban structures and/or activities in close proximity to each

other. This work has only been able to identify and define the three different eras by taking an extremely broad view which has possibly concealed much contradictory detail.

The investigation was further challenged by the complex make-up of the NCC and its concurrent involvement in multiple planning initiatives. When combined with the fragmented and overlapping nature of societal evolution, the result was that not all contemporary planning projects appeared imbued with the imperatives of the same broad era. Further, the long-term nature of many of the Commission's physical planning projects meant that the original societal imperatives that provided the impetus for the initiation of the project changed before the completion of the project. If construction was too far advanced to allow alteration of the material form of the project, it may have erroneously given the impression the NCC was operating according to the tenets of a previous era. The most obvious example of this is provided by the Place du Portage development which has been extensively discussed in this work.

The result of both the nature of societal change and the concurrent involvement of the NCC in multiple projects, meant that evidence for the Commission's accordance with more than one era could often be gleaned from a single AR. Throughout the course of the investigation, therefore, a judgement has

had to be made as to the dominant mode of operation at any one time. This judgement was arrived at by assessing the profile accorded to different initiatives described in both the ARs and the interviews. This was, of necessity, a subjective process and a different researcher could, perhaps, have come to a different conclusion about which mode of operation dominated at any one time.

The conclusions drawn from this work have suggested a direction for future investigations. A similar temporal analysis of other Public organizations apparently more democratically accountable and concerned with local conditions may be fruitful. For example, the evolving policies of the City of Ottawa would make an interesting study. The workings of broader societal forces may prove to be more influential for this body than is generally realized and may help to explain controversial decisions that appear inexplicable or problematic when only the local context is considered. Further, the results of a study of a more locally accountable body could be compared to the results of this work. This may allow some conclusion to be drawn as to the 'social rootedness' of a centralized body as compared to a locally accountable organization.

Further work could also examine the evolving mode of operation of other bodies in the context of broader societal

change. For instance, large Private corporations, union bodies and consumer organizations would provide a different perspective on development and may exhibit different responses to the progression of societal dynamics. Again, this would allow a judgement to be made as to the extent of the social rootedness and responsiveness of these various organization.

In final conclusion, this thesis has attempted to make a judgement as to whether the NCC's mode of operation was modified in accordance with broader societal evolution over the course of its existence. There appears to be enough evidence to suggest that this has been the case. The temporal discourse analysis has revealed the nuances and subtle details of how the political and strategic aims of the NCC intersected with broader societal evolution to force both a re-imaging of, and a fundamental change in, its mode of operation over the last 40 years.

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APPENDIX 1

Explanation of Interview Subjects

- Interview 1 - A Senior Director of Communications, with the National Capital Commission from 1988 to present.
- Interview 2 - A Senior Director of Planning, Financing and Security, with the National Capital Commission from 1991 to present.
- Interview 3 - An executive Vice-President and General Manager, with the National Capital Commission from 1991 to 1996.
- Interview 4 - A former Senior Planner, with the National Capital Commission from 1968 to 1998.

GRAPH 1

Source: Compiled from NCC Annual Reports - 1960-61 to 1996-97.

GRAPH 2

Source: Compiled from NCC Annual Reports - 1960-61 to 1996-97.
Inflation figures taken from CPI numbers published by
Statistics Canada.
Cat. No. 11-210-XPB, Vol. 13.