

Supply—Solicitor General

• (9:10 p.m.)

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Educational broadcasting facilities—

60f. To authorize the Secretary of State, with the approval of the governor in council, to procure the incorporation of a company pursuant to part I of the Canada Corporations Act, to construct or otherwise acquire and operate, subject to the Radio Act and the Broadcasting Act, broadcasting facilities for the broadcasting by such company of programs for or on behalf of provincial and other Canadian educational institutions and authorities, and to authorize the Minister of Finance, on terms and conditions approved by the governor in council, to make payments to or on behalf of such company for the purposes thereof during the 1966-67 and 1967-68 fiscal years—not exceeding in the aggregate \$750,000, \$750,000.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): Mr. Chairman, I think this item has been called in error. If 60f is the item I think it is, I do not think it was intended that it should be called, and certainly that it would be carried without discussion.

Mr. Knowles: A firm undertaking was given that it would not be called.

Mr. Benson: The ones we are carrying now are supplementary estimates G.

The Chairman: I apologize to the committee. This supplementary estimate F was mixed up with supplementary estimates G. It is not called.

Item stands.

(The following items were agreed to):

1g. Departmental administration, including grants as detailed in the estimates, \$125,675.

15g. Administration, operation and maintenance, \$213,772.

27g. To extend the purposes of secretary of state vote 27a, supplementary estimates (A), 1966-67 to authorize, notwithstanding the said vote, payments in the current fiscal year of the remainder of the amount not exceeding \$60,000,000 referred to therein, \$21,600,000.

35g. Administration, operation and maintenance including grants and contributions for language instruction and citizenship promotion, \$107,000.

50g. Payments to the national arts centre corporation to be used for the purposes set out in the National Arts Centre Act, \$25,000.

DEPARTMENT OF THE SOLICITOR GENERAL

12g. Reimbursement of the penitentiaries industrial revolving fund for the value of stores which have become obsolete, unserviceable, lost or destroyed, \$16,007.

Item agreed to.

25g. Payment in the current and subsequent fiscal years of a pension to Mrs. Helen Coleman, Mrs. Gladys Welfringer and Mrs. Annie Rosalle Laird in an amount equal to the amount that would be

[Mr. Bell (Carleton.)

payable in that year to each such person under schedule B to the Pension Act if each of them were the widow of a Lt. Col. (Army) and entitled, pursuant to the Pension Act, to payment of a pension in that year at the rate set out in schedule B to that act minus any amount payable to such person in the year pursuant to any other statutory authority providing for the payment of a pension in respect of the loss of life while engaged in the performance of duty; amount required for 1966-67, \$1,068.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask a question or two of the minister piloting these estimates of over \$300 million, or one third of a billion dollars, through the house in one evening. I gather that this item 25g has to do with establishing a little larger pensions for three ladies, of whom I know nothing, but I gather from the information given with the item that it has something to do with the R.C.M.P. I am still smarting under the recollection of what happened to Belec and Poitras, two men from Montreal who were the first commissioned officers in the entire history of the R.C.M.P. to be convicted of malfeasance when in office, with their conviction being upheld by the appeal court in the R.C.M.P. service.

I understand we are doing a little bit of legislating by supplementary estimates in order to increase the pensions of the three estimable ladies mentioned under this item, because the cabinet does not have the authority to issue an order in council to increase their pensions.

But if we have to pass this supplementary estimate tonight in order to give pensions to these three ladies and thus establish a new law, because the item refers to this year and subsequent years, I wish to recall, with respect to Poitras and Belec, that they would not have received any pension at all if they had got their just desserts. Under this Liberal government, however, the cabinet brought in an order to establish pensions for them, in one case of about \$6,000 a year and in the other of about \$1,900 a year. If the cabinet thought it wise to establish by order in council pensions for these two men who were convicted, and whose convictions were upheld, why did it not bring in a special order in council to establish the necessary funds for these three women?

Mr. Benson: Mr. Chairman, I am not allowed to give legal opinions. I can merely assure my hon. friend, in the particular instance that is before us to increase these pensions, that the advice given to us by the law officers of the crown was that we must do this through a special item in the estimates or by