

*Patent Act*

I am sure we welcome the announcement that this inquiry is to be set up. We agree with the Secretary of State that it is in good hands if Mr. Ilsley is to be chairman of the inquiry. As the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) has said, the bill at first looked to us like an uncontroversial one, and like one so simple that the sponsor probably would not bother getting to his feet on second reading. I wondered for a while whether the Secretary of State wanted to get into another argument, but I gather that is not his real purpose. I congratulate him on having learned something this week, namely on having learned that it is a good idea for the government to disclose its hand. I congratulate him on assuring us that no postcards are going to turn up in the discussion of this matter, and for having told us what other steps the government plans to take if this measure goes through.

It seems to be a reasonable proposition that those who wish this service should be required to pay for it. I believe we took that position with respect to something else the other day, namely newspapers and periodicals. I had better watch out, Mr. Speaker, or I shall be as out of order as was the Secretary of State. However, we welcome the frankness of the minister today and see no reason why the bill should not be given second reading.

**Mr. Ray Thomas (Wetaskiwin):** Mr. Speaker, I want to add, to the words of those who have already spoken, my word of thanks to the Secretary of State for giving us notice of the revision that is in prospect. That notice undoubtedly gives to members of the house and to many outside the house the opportunity to dig down into their experience and knowledge and undoubtedly to come up with some concrete suggestions.

As to the amending bill that is before the house, I heartily agree with it and the principle behind it, namely that those who use the service—after all, they are given certain privileges—are the ones who should be made to pay for those privileges. In passing, Mr. Speaker, I should like to say that the Secretary of State (Mr. Pickersgill) made mention of postcards, but I am glad that at least here we have no second-class patents with which to contend.

**Mr. J. T. Richard (Ottawa East):** I welcome, Mr. Speaker, the many announcements made by the Secretary of State (Mr. Pickersgill) today. We heard some announcements regarding monetary changes in the bill, but there were also some very good changes to be made suggested in the Patent Act concerning inventions by public servants. This

reform has been long overdue because in the past public servants have not been very well rewarded for their inventive genius. I welcomed the increased fees which will assist the work of our patent system in Canada.

I know it is an easy thing for the Secretary of State to stand in his place and say that those who want the privilege should pay for it. I want to tell the members of the house that it is not always a privilege to get a patent. Very few of the people who obtain a patent make anything out of it. What the Patent Act does do, and what it was designed for, is to confer a privilege on the public to help inventors in this and other countries to develop in their respective scientific fields. The patent is granted to a person because he has spent some time inventing something that was not known before. He gives it to the public after having benefited for seventeen years by the privilege, as some might call it, of being the exclusive owner of the right to use the invention. As I said before, the patentee very seldom benefits from the patent.

Patentees are willing to pay the higher fees. I have no objection to the fees mentioned in the schedule attached to this bill, although I believe they have reached the limit because they are as high as those charged in the United States. The patentee or inventor does expect, however, to get good service. The thing which has prevented the patent office in this country from giving the same service as patent offices in other countries is the fact that we have not been able to recruit the necessary assistance to run the patent office. What we have is very good, and the improvements over the past seven or eight years have been excellent. I am glad the present Secretary of State is taking such an interest in the Patent Act. I hope he will remain Secretary of State for some time so that we may have a minister who knows the Patent Act.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the purpose of this bill is to offset the deficit which the patent office has shown for three years. With a revenue of about \$600,000 in 1949, there was a surplus of \$230,000. This year, with a revenue of about \$777,000, we have a deficit of \$133,000. While the increase in fees would have taken care of increased salaries and things of that sort, the thing which is really responsible for the deficit is the printing of patents. I believe this should be brought to the attention of the house. The printing of patents and the *Patent Record* cost about \$400,000 a year. The revenue from the sale of the printed patent and the *Patent Record*