

Official Residence for Prime Minister

Mr. Green: I do not know who is being undignified about this matter, unless it is the undignified rush of the government to get it through without any questions. Will the Minister of Public Works answer my question, whether the figures he has given include the cost of furnishings?

Mr. Fournier (Hull): Mr. Chairman, I do not know. I have given a figure as to what I believe this building will cost. Not being an expert on these matters, and not even having estimates from my own officials, I cannot say. The plans are made with the architects on the ground. Demolition of the building has started, and really only a shell will remain. I do not think any contracting firm would give a firm price on such a project. I may be wide of the mark in what I said, and I am a little sorry I did put a figure on *Hansard*, even though I did have \$100,000 leeway. Later my estimates will come up and I shall have my officials here. I hope they are not as ignorant as I am about the figures.

Mr. Green: The minister has mentioned the architects. Surely the architects are not providing the furnishings as well. He has just said he based his figures on what the architects were going to do, but my question was whether or not the cost of the furnishings is over and above the figure given by the minister.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I would not know at this stage.

Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood): I do not think that we deserve the criticism of the Minister of Labour, given not in his usual kindly way. I should like to say this. We all want a dignified residence for the Prime Minister. There is no question about that. But there is nothing dignified in seeing large sums of money thrown about carelessly. At the present time, when we can get no accurate figures, when the whole thing seems just to be a hit or miss business, I think people will be disturbed by it—that is, the people who do not have residences provided for them.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in.

Mr. Howe thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 266, to provide for the operation and maintenance of a residence for the Prime Minister of Canada.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

[Mr. Mitchell.]

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL**REPAIRS TO BUILDING—QUESTION AS TO LOWERING OF LEVEL OF RIDEAU RIVER**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. T. Richard (Ottawa East): I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Public Works in connection with the work to be done on the research council building on the Rideau river. Is it the intention to lower the level of the Rideau river? If so, when is it the intention to begin this work? Can it possibly be delayed in order to allow the beaches to operate this summer?

Hon. Alphonse Fournier (Minister of Public Works): I do not think we would take water out of the Rideau river during the summer to do repair work on the national research council building. I will give instructions that these works be delayed until the summer season is over.

MARSHLANDS**INQUIRY AS TO RECLAMATION IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. W. MacNaught (Prince): I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Agriculture. Have any plans been made to reclaim marshlands in Prince Edward Island?

Right Hon. J. G. Gardiner (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member just presented me with notice of his question as I was coming into the house. My answer is that we are soon to undertake a diking project on the Johnston river marshlands in Queens county. It will take about three months to complete this work, and it will protect about 250 acres.

INSECT PESTS**QUESTION AS TO INFESTATION OF ARMY WORMS IN MUSKOKA AND KAWARTHA DISTRICTS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. K. Fraser (Peterborough West): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Has he had any complaints about the army worms that are attacking the trees in the Muskoka and Kawartha districts of Ontario? They are destroying the trees all through those districts, over hundreds of acres. Is his department doing anything about it?

Right Hon. J. G. Gardiner (Minister of Agriculture): Complaints have not been brought to my attention. I would not say that means that those in the department do not know about the matter. But that kind of effort is directed by the province rather than by the federal government.