

*Beauharnois Power Bills*

Mr. BENNETT moved the third reading of the bill.

Mr. ARMAND LAVERGNE (Montmagny): I just wish to state, as a member from Quebec, that I do not believe Quebec rights are in danger in this bill. Also, I think the St. Lawrence is a dominion asset and that dominion rights should be preserved before anything else in a question of this kind.

Motion agreed to, and bill read the third time and passed.

The house in committee on Bill No. 143, respecting the Beauharnois Light, Heat and Power Company, Limited.

Section 1 agreed to.

On section 2—Right to divert water.

Mr. CAHAN: I wish to move that section 2 be amended by inserting after the word "assigns" in the second line the following:

in so far as it may be within the competence of parliament.

Amendment agreed to.

Section as amended agreed to.

On section 3—Further diversion to be approved.

Mr. CAHAN: I desire to move that section 3 be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

3. The governor in council shall not consent to any further or additional diversion by said company of the river St. Lawrence except with the express approval of parliament.

That leaves entirely open the question as to whether or not and to what extent such consent is necessary.

Amendment agreed to.

Section as amended agreed to.

Section 4 agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

## SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. LaVergne in the chair.

Auditor General's office—salaries, including the Auditor General at \$10,000 additional to 7-8 Edward V, chapter 6, \$443,825.

Mr. BENNETT: Under the new statute the salary is a charge against the consolidated revenue fund, and this will be the last year in which it will be dealt with in this way.

Item agreed to.

[Mr. C. A. Stewart.]

Loan to harbour commissioners of Montreal, with interest at a rate to be fixed by the governor in council, for such period and upon such terms and conditions as the governor in council may determine, and to be applied in payment of deficits resulting from the operations of the Montreal harbour bridge, \$681,600.

Mr. BENNETT: This item might be reduced by payments that have been received since it was placed in the estimates, but it is unnecessary to do so because it will only mean that so much less will be required, so it might pass as it is.

Item agreed to.

To provide for payment annually from the consolidated revenue fund of the sum of \$2,000 to each minister of the crown charged with the administration of a department, the solicitor general, and the leader of the opposition, and the sum of \$1,000 each to the speaker of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Commons, in lieu of motor cars and their maintenance, including chauffeurs, the acceptance of such sums not to vacate their respective seats in parliament; and to authorize the governor in council to appoint any person now employed in the public service as a chauffeur of a passenger automobile at Ottawa, whose position is abolished, to a vacant position in the public service, provided such chauffeur has been continuously employed as such for at least two years and that the appointment will be made at no higher remuneration than he is now receiving, \$42,000.

Mr. BOURASSA: I do not want to delay the committee, but I do not think this estimate should have been imposed upon the house under the circumstances in which the country finds itself just now. It is perhaps a small matter in itself and I am not going to say that the ministers are sufficiently paid without receiving a further remuneration. But this matter has been commented upon in many quarters and it creates a very bad impression. The practice of ministers having automobiles of their own has grown up without special statute, and this is interpreted as simply a disguised increase in salary for ministers and the leader of the opposition; and in the present circumstances it is a very bad way of terminating the session.

Mr. BENNETT: I should hesitate to speak about this, but it is desirable that a wrong impression should not be left on the minds of the committee. The cost of ministerial cars last year was \$47,266.52; the cost of departmental cars was some \$34,000, making a total of \$81,267.26; with a net purchase price for ministers' cars and others of \$106,748.04. Of the 36 cars, 20 have been turned over to the departmental garage, Department of National Defence, for storage and ultimate disposal.