

of 142,857. The number of United States citizens entering Canada at Fort Frances by automobile was 534,477, and by bus, 7,685, for a total of 542,162. Honourable senators will therefore see the value and necessity of an improved bridge between the two municipalities.

The present bridge is in the downtown area of Fort Frances, and in view of the number of people, trucks and buses passing over it the traffic congestion caused between Fort Frances and International Falls can well be imagined. The new bridge will be financed by tolls, and each country must provide the land for the approaches. This has been done on the Fort Frances side.

This amendment is to provide for the completion of the bridge between December 31, 1975 and December 31, 1979. It is expected that commissioners will be appointed from each country to prepare the plans, build the bridge and operate it.

To my mind, this bridge is a necessity because the congestion on the Fort Frances side is astonishing. The United States has moved its Customs and Immigration offices about 200 or 300 yards from its end of the bridge. A large number of local people are continually passing over it. Of course, it is important to remember that Fort Frances is the port of entry for tourists going to the many fishing and hunting camps around the Rainy River and Lake of the Woods.

I do not think this bill need be referred to committee because it was before the Transport and Communications Committee of the other place on February 20, 1975, when Mr. John Reid, the sponsor, stated that the two purposes of the bill were, first, to complement the omnibus bill which was passed by the United States Congress, applying to all international bridges; and, second, to extend the completion date beyond December 31, 1975. The Government of Canada has supplied vacant land on the Ontario side, about two or three miles north of Fort Frances. This will relieve the congestion on the United States side.

This bridge is in the constituency of Kenora-Rainy River, for which Mr. Reid is the member. This seat was held by the Honourable Senator Benidickson before he was summoned to the Senate.

I strongly commend this bill to the favourable consideration of the Senate on second reading.

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat: Honourable senators—

The Hon. the Speaker: I wish to inform the Senate that if Senator Molgat speaks now, his speech will have the effect of closing the debate on the motion for second reading of this bill.

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat: Honourable senators, I thank my honourable colleague from Manitoba, Senator Haig, for his comments on the bill. I agree totally with everything he said.

There is a great deal of urgency to proceeding with this matter. It might be asked why it is that we have to have an amendment now to an act that was passed some years ago. It is because of events that occur when dealing with a number of jurisdictions. The construction of this bridge involves two national governments—the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada—the Governments of the States of Minnesota and the Province

[Senator Haig.]

of Ontario, and the municipal governments of Fort Frances and International Falls.

The need for the bridge is evident. What Senator Haig stated is absolutely accurate. One need only drive through there on a summer weekend to see how urgently needed is the work we are discussing; how urgently this bridge is required.

If there is no disposition to refer the bill to committee—and I do not believe there is any need for that—we can complete second reading now and have third reading when the proper time has elapsed. I support Senator Haig in that regard.

Motion agreed to and bill read second time.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read a third time?

Senator Haig: Next sitting.

Senator Molgat: Next sitting, or if there is any disposition, with leave, now.

Senator Flynn: May I ask the sponsor whether this is a private bill? If it is a private bill, I think it has to go to committee, unless we have changed our rules.

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Senator Molgat: The original act, passed on June 30, 1971, was a public act. I would assume that this amending bill with which we are dealing now is a public bill. I am prepared to follow whatever the normal routine is.

Senator Grosart: Read the title of the bill.

Senator Molgat: I am advised that it is in fact a public bill.

Senator Molgat moved that the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading at the next sitting.

Motion agreed to.

THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF COMMONS ACT, THE SALARIES ACT AND THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault moved the second reading of Bill C-44, to amend the Senate and House of Commons Act, the Salaries Act and the Parliamentary Secretaries Act.

He said: Honourable senators, Bill C-44 deals with indemnities and allowances for members of both Houses of Parliament. This measure simply gives recognition to the fact that since the allowances and indemnities were last adjusted in October, 1970, there has been a substantial reduction in purchasing power. The \$18,000, which was designated as a fair indemnity at that time in terms of purchasing power, has declined something in the order of 38 per cent. This is part of a worldwide phenomenon which has seen the erosion of currencies. Despite the fact that Canada has done better than most nations in the fight against inflation, inflation has affected the allowances and indemnities paid to members of Parliament, whether they serve in the House of Commons or in the Senate.

In addition, the expenses associated with being a member of Parliament have escalated significantly, indeed