

cede that this order in council adequately meets that which he was endeavouring to get at through the introduction of Bill C-16.

The hon. member's amendment is slightly deficient in another unimportant aspect. It calls for submission of the authority's financial reports to the United States. While it is true the bridge act envisages the development of an international authority, in fact the United States, in particular the state of Michigan, chose not to establish a joint administration of the bridge. The Blue Water Bridge Authority is, therefore, a purely Canadian entity and its financial reports should be submitted to the Canadian government alone. Perhaps the hon. member was being farsighted and hopeful, as I was, that we would have a joint administration of the bridge rather than an administration on the Canadian side only.

Lest it be thought that since 1964, when the Blue Water Bridge Authority Act was passed, the government has been unaware of the financial obligations of the authority, I wish to make it clear that such is not the case. Section 9 of the Railway Act—if anybody had an objection, all he had to do was read this particular section—expressly grants the Canadian Transport Commission jurisdiction and control over tolls charged for passage across international bridges and requires each bridge authority to submit its schedule of tolls to the commission in order that this schedule be properly assessed by a commission, and it has to be accompanied by a financial statement.

• (1630)

The government, therefore, has been fully aware of the financial operations of the authority. I might add that if any persons wish to question the schedule of tolls at the Blue Water Bridge or any other international bridge, they may apply in the normal manner to the Canadian Transport Commission which has power to order that a public hearing be held to examine the tolls. There has been a suggestion here that this was not done. This is not true. After the Blue Water Bridge Authority was set up, and after its initial studies and managerial work, there was a request for a public hearing and the Canadian Transport Commission held a public hearing in Sarnia in, I believe, 1965. I do not have the specific date but I know a public hearing took place at that time. I know it as solicitor for the corporation of the county of Lambton.

My friend has made the suggestion, which I suggest he might have written when both of us thought there would be an election, that the members of the Blue Water Bridge Authority read like a Liberal "Who's Who". I think that can be attributed to a backlash, because from 1942 until 1962 we had a Conservative member of parliament both provincially and federally, and all the appointments of Conservatives had been made during that period. There were only Liberals left. There were some wonderful men available from whom we had the opportunity to choose. They have done an admirable job.

There is a vacancy now on the Blue Water Bridge Authority. I have received no less than 27 names. I am flattered that from one of my Conservative colleagues in the practice of law I received seven names. I think the hon. member will be pleasantly surprised, if the recommendation I have made is accepted, that it will not read

#### *Blue Water Bridge Authority Bill*

like a Liberal "Who's Who" particularly and at least we will have a "Who's Who" from some other party.

I want to thank the hon. member for bringing forth this bill. I believe it is a good bill. However, in light of the information I have obtained from the Department of External Affairs and the fact that an order in council is to be passed to do precisely what the hon. member and I want done, I do not think we really need this bill. I expect there are others who will wish to comment on the bill.

I did not realize there is so much interest in the Blue Water bridge. I come from an area of the country which happens to be graced with the beautiful waters of the river St. Clair and Lake Huron. I do not have the statistics—perhaps the hon. member for Lambton-Kent has them in one of his own speeches—but tourists go over that bridge in hundreds of thousands every year. This is possibly the reason there is more than an average number of people in the House at this late hour on a Friday afternoon; they want to hear about the Blue Water bridge.

The fact is that these records have been kept and that now an order in council is to be passed to make them public. On that note, I believe private members' hour has been well served this afternoon. I am sure there are others who wish to comment on the remarks of the hon. member for Lambton-Kent and myself.

**Mr. McCutcheon:** Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question?

**Mr. Cullen:** I never refuse a question from the hon. member.

**Mr. McCutcheon:** I am delighted to hear the words of the hon. member for Sarnia, but since there are so many announcements by the government to the effect that there will be an order in council soon, I wonder whether there is any chance that the government has taken him into its confidence so that he could be a little more precise concerning when the order in council will be passed.

**Mr. Cullen:** To the extent I am not violating my oath of secrecy, I would say the order in council has been drafted. The hon. member has not been on the government side and therefore may not know that many orders in council are passed. I believe it is merely awaiting the administrative procedure of a signature. The magic word I have heard around here is "soon". That is all I can say without violating my oath of secrecy.

**Mr. Murray McBride (Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, having heard the expression of respect between the hon. member for Lambton-Kent (Mr. McCutcheon) and the hon. member for Sarnia (Mr. Cullen), I almost fear entering this debate. But I believe anyone who has taken the time to read Bill C-16, indeed has taken the time to ask himself why this bill was brought forth and has gone back into the history of this whole enterprise, will be aware that the subject being considered is of paramount interest to the connection between the province of Ontario and the state of Michigan which bears on the constituencies the members represent.

There are also some broader implications in this bill. As we know, the bill is entitled "An act to amend the Blue Water Bridge Authority". It is a very short bill having to