

Trans-Canada Highway

minister to check as quickly as possible to see whether the province of Nova Scotia will not do what seven other provinces have done and release this correspondence so that it will be available to the members of the house.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I am quite ready to suggest to the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply that when he writes to the province of Nova Scotia he send along a copy of the record of the debate on this matter so that there will be no misunderstanding as to what has been said by hon. members who have spoken. We are just at the resolution stage, and I am not familiar with all the facts. As I said a moment ago, when the bill is up for second reading, answers will be made to the questions asked this morning. When we get second reading of the bill and go into committee, members will be able to secure all the information they want. As to the correspondence between the provinces and the federal government, we will once again ask whether permission can be given for its being tabled.

Mr. Black (Cumberland): I want to thank the minister. I am going to ask that second reading of the bill be postponed until we have the correspondence with all the provinces.

Mr. Fraser: When the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply is answering the other questions, will he also tell us who will have the final say in regard to contracts for construction of the highway?

An hon. Member: The province.

Mr. Fraser: Some people may say the province, but the federal government is contributing fifty per cent of the cost, according to what the minister stated, and it will likely have some say. I do not know that, but I want to find out. Will the federal government have any say about the awarding of contracts?

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I will draw the minister's attention to the question, and see if an answer can be given.

Mr. Blackmore: I was not able to hear all that the leader of the opposition asked, and I should like to have the situation clarified, if the minister does not mind. It is well known that at this stage we could ask numerous questions and elicit information we would all like to have. If the minister sees fit, he can give us permission to ask these questions on the first section of the bill when it is going through committee. Did the leader of the opposition ask the minister if he was willing to grant that privilege? If

he is, I see no reason why we should not let this stage go by, because we shall be able to get all the information we need when the bill is going through committee if a certain amount of latitude is permitted on section 1.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I do not see any objection to that procedure. At this time we are considering the resolution and the expediency of introducing a measure. I know that members could ask many questions. Up to the moment they have asked certain questions, which the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply will endeavour to answer. I do not see why we should try to curtail any debate or cross-examination of the minister on a project of this magnitude. All latitude should be given to hon. members and, if possible, answers should be made to all questions asked.

Mr. Blackmore: Perhaps I did not make it clear to the minister what I have in mind. Is the minister willing to agree that we should have latitude on section 1 when the bill is going through committee, so that we can then have the whole discussion we would ordinarily have at this stage?

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I understand that when the first section of a bill is called there is usually a general discussion, and I do not see any reason why on this bill we should depart from that procedure.

Mr. Fraser: Have we the minister's assurance that we may do that?

An hon. Member: Sit down.

Mr. Fraser: We want to be certain we have that assurance. We have sat down before, and I want to make sure about that point.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I was taken by surprise this morning when I was asked to see if I could have the resolution put through. I know my good friend from Peterborough West is quite reasonable in everything he does in the house. I think he will say that I am reasonable, and I am ready to suggest to the minister that he should be reasonable in his conduct of the proceedings on this bill.

Mr. Fraser: Very well.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in.

Mr. Fournier, Hull (for Mr. Winters) thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 194, to encourage and to assist in the construction of a trans-Canada highway.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.