

Interest Act

so far as it rests in our files, has not in any sense been used against the individual. But information may have been communicated to the United States authorities. They make their assessment and they form their judgment as to whether or not the individual concerned should be admitted. I do not know of any way in which the matter could be raised here in a court in Canada.

Mr. Fisher: Could there be a repetition of the Norman case situation?

Mr. Fulton: Not under the new government.

Some hon. Members: Five o'clock.

The Deputy Chairman: It being five o'clock, it is my duty to leave the chair pursuant to standing order 15 (3) in order to allow the house to proceed to consideration of private and public bills.

Progress reported.

Mr. Speaker: It being five o'clock, the house will now proceed to the consideration of private and public bills, the former having precedence. As hon. members will note, there are on the order paper two bills under the heading of private bills. Is it the wish of the house to have both bills referred to the committee of the whole at this time?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE BILLS**ERNEST FRANK CROSS**

The house in committee on Bill No. 181, for the relief of Ernest Frank Cross—Mr. Rea—Mr. Casselman in the chair.

On clause 1.

Mr. Regier: Mr. Chairman I know there is very much more important legislation coming up, or I hope it will be coming up before the house, than this particular legislation, indeed legislation that is of great concern to many hundreds of thousands of Canadians. However, I do want to say a few words on this case because I feel they should be placed on the record.

It has long been a tradition in the administration of justice in Canadian law courts that the defence be provided, if necessary, with adequate means to conduct as able a defence as can possibly be provided. No one in Canada is summarily condemned because of the inability to afford a defence and I understand that in the civil court, if the respondent in a divorce case pleads she is unable to afford an adequate defence, the court in most provinces in Canada then orders the petitioner to supply her with sufficient funds. I believe this is also being done in a similar manner in connection with the bills which are before

a committee in the other place and that on a number of actual occasions the petitioner has been ordered to supply money.

In this particular case of Cross versus Cross the respondent wrote several letters, possibly not all of them to the right people and perhaps not in the right manner, indicating that she desired to appeal this matter before the miscellaneous private bills committee. She did not actually want to appeal but she indicated she wanted a re-hearing of this case and that is her right. She therefore appealed for the necessary funds. The committee, rightly or wrongly and I am not prepared to enter into an argument on this subject, felt it did not have the authority to order the petitioner to supply these funds. The committee furthermore felt it had no public funds of its own at its disposal which it might use to assist this lady to prepare her defence in the action which was being sought by her husband.

Some of us then asked the committee to appeal to this house and to ask this house to order the committee to ask the petitioner to supply the necessary moneys. The committee voted against this proposal and I regret that it did so. I very much regret that we, acting as an entirely independent body in our approach in each of these cases, or any action taken in the other place, are hereby condemning a woman as guilty of having committed adultery in the province of Quebec and have not seen fit to supply her with the wherewithal to present her case. I regret this action very much and it points out once again the callous disregard of human rights that obtains in this whole procedure which we are following.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE—THIRD READING

Bill No. 218, for the relief of Gordon Frank Skilling.—Mr. Rea.

INTEREST ACT**AMENDMENT TO ESTABLISH MINIMUM RATE**

Mr. H. R. Argue (Assiniboia) moved the second reading of Bill No. 17, to amend the Interest Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to place a limit on the interest rates that can be charged on any transaction throughout this country where federal jurisdiction would apply. I have studied interest rates that are being charged in many fields and in many areas of this country and I find that such rates are exorbitant and