

Interim Supply

the Nelson river which cost some \$2 million. There were also in that area a very large dredge and a large quantity of other steel products. Apparently the government has decided to dispose of this material as scrap. I have not all the information in connection with this matter, but, according to the letter which I received this morning, a salvage company was set up known as the Port Nelson Salvage Company. Apparently this company intended to transport this scrap material from Port Nelson to the nearest point on the Hudson Bay railway. They hired ten men in The Pas, together with some sixteen Indians a little farther north. To make a long story short, this salvage company has gone bankrupt, and the cheques which were issued as wages for these men have come back marked n.s.f. Is there any guaranteeing clause in any of the contracts involved in this transaction which would enable the men to get their wages?

I think it is only necessary to say that a number of these men were already unemployed before they took on this job. They borrowed sufficient money to pay their fares north, and now when they land back in The Pas they find that their cheques cannot be cashed, owing to lack of funds in the account of the salvage company.

I have not much information about this company, although I am told that a Mr. M. A. Goodene, of Toronto, had something to do with the company. He rented a couple of tractors and some other equipment to take on the job. It may be that two departments of government are involved, the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Department of Transport. I would ask those who sold the properties on behalf of the government if they thoroughly investigated the matter, and I should like to know if there are any qualifying clauses in the contract which would enable these men to secure their wages.

Mr. Abbott: I shall have the matter looked into.

Motion (Mr. Abbott) agreed to.

The Chairman: Shall I report the resolution.

Mr. Drew: On division.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. Abbott thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 248, for granting to His Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of the financial year ending March 31, 1950.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Abbott moved that the bill be read the first time.

[Mr. Moore.]

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Mr. Drew: On division.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

Mr. Speaker: When shall said bill be read the second time?

Some hon. Members: Now.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Abbott moves, seconded by Mr. Claxton, that the said bill be read the second time. Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Mr. Drew: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Macdonald (Brantford City) in the chair.

On section 1—*Short title.*

Mr. Hackett: What is the total amount of estimates, including those originally introduced and all supplementaries?

Hon. Douglas Abbott (Minister of Finance): Mr. Chairman, I shall have to take a moment to make the arithmetical calculation. The main estimates which were introduced, and which my hon. friend has before him, including the statutory items, total \$2,217,678,181. The Newfoundland supplementaries, which I have not before me at the present time, were approximately \$55 million, making a total for the current year of some \$2,272 million. Perhaps my hon. friend would accept that round figure, on the understanding that I could give him the exact information later. It is a matter of record.

Mr. Hackett: Did the minister not mention any supplementary estimates?

Mr. Abbott: No supplementary estimates have been tabled, with the exception of the Newfoundland supplementaries.

Mr. Hackett: Are there to be any supplementary estimates?

Mr. Abbott: That will be a matter for the new government to decide.

Mr. Probe: Mr. Chairman, I should like to have a final word with respect to a matter of some importance which should be considered by the government in office when we reassemble at the next session. There is one problem which, to its disgrace I would say, the parliament of Canada has never attempted to tackle.

When parliament reassembles a certain number of hon. members who today sit in the House of Commons will have been defeated in the election—and perhaps after they have