

2. Who were the exporters and what was the amount of such material exported by each?

Mr. McILRAITH: Return tabled.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SALARIES PAID IN QUEBEC PROVINCE

Mr. BERTRAND (Terrebonne):

What was the amount of salaries paid in the province of Quebec by the government of Canada during 1945, 1946 and 1947?

SUBSIDIES TO GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC PROVINCE

Mr. BERTRAND (Terrebonne):

1. What was the amount of subsidies or grants paid by the government of Canada to the government of the province of Quebec during 1945, 1946 and 1947?

2. How much was paid by each department and for what purposes?

VETERANS AFFAIRS—HOUSING—LINCOLN COUNTY

Mr. LOCKHART:

1. How many veterans have signed contracts to date for houses built under the V.L.A. at (a) Niagara Falls; (b) Welland; (c) St. Catharines?

2. What are the names of veterans who have signed such contracts?

3. What deposit was made in each case?

4. Were the prices included in the contracts signed, above or below the prices indicated to the veteran at the time he took possession and paid the required deposit?

5. Were there any price increases in contracts signed? If so, what was the reason for the advance in price?

6. Are the septic tank installations in the houses at St. Catharines unsatisfactory?

7. If so, what is being done to correct same?

8. Has any additional work been done on these V.L.A. houses at St. Catharines since January 1, 1947 to date? If so, at what cost?

VETERANS LAND ACT—STRATFORD, ONT.

Mr. BRADSHAW:

1. What was the unit cost of the houses constructed by the V.L.A. at Stratford?

2. What was the cost of each house to the veteran?

3. What was the cost of alterations and repairs to these houses since construction?

4. Is there special sewage disposal equipment for these houses?

5. If so, what was the cost of installation?

6. Is there any charge now being made for the operation of this equipment?

7. If so, what is the charge and who pays it?

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

YUKON QUARTZ MINING ACT—SURVEYING OF MINERAL CLAIMS

Mr. BLACK (Yukon):

For a copy of all correspondence and communications between the Minister of Mines and Resources, all officials of his department and corporations and/or persons concerning the

action now being taken by the minister and officials of his department to enforce the provisions of section 78 of the Yukon Quartz Mining Act, notifying owners of unsurveyed mineral claims in Yukon to have them surveyed by a dominion land surveyor within one year from the date upon which such notification is sent.

HONG KONG—CORRESPONDENCE SINCE JANUARY 29, 1948

Mr. BRACKEN:

For a copy of all correspondence between the British and Canadian governments since and including January 29 last relative to any matter arising out of the Canadian expeditionary force sent to Hong Kong in 1941.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: When I saw this motion on the order paper for the production of the correspondence mentioned, I thought it advisable to secure the opinion of the Clerk of this house before giving an answer as to what would be appropriate in the matter of producing the papers. I shall read to the house the opinion which the Clerk has given to me. I would remind hon. members that the Clerk is the recognized authority on Canadian parliamentary practice and the rules of the House of Commons. The opinion that I have received from the Clerk is as follows:

Motion No. 3 calls for all correspondence between the British and the Canadian governments since and including January 29 last relative to any matter arising out of the Canadian expeditionary force sent to Hong Kong in 1941. This motion does not take into consideration that there may be matters which, for some reason or other, it is not advisable to produce. If the motion is adopted, the government will be bound to table even correspondence which it is not otherwise free to make public. Redlich says, in vol. II, page 42:

"On the question of communicating diplomatic documents, every government must have a discretion as to what ought to be published and what suppressed."

Todd says, at page 356, volume I of Parliamentary Government in England:

"But a certain amount of discretion must always be allowed to the government in respect to communicating or withholding documents and official correspondence which may be asked for by either house of parliament."

And at page 454 Todd deprecates "the inexpediency of applications for documents which the responsible advisers of the crown consider it imperative to withhold."

It is a well known rule that correspondence between our government and another cannot be tabled unless both agree to its production; and, moreover, none of the correspondence should be made public while negotiations are still pending.

Arthur Beauchesne,
Clerk of the House of Commons.

I must say that I agree with the opinion expressed by the clerk, Mr. Beauchesne. Therefore I feel that the papers asked for cannot be laid on the table.