

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
March 25, 1947.

The Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce met this day at 11.00 a.m. The Chairman, Mr. Hughes Cleaver, presided.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we have a quorum. The meeting called this morning is to deal with the patent bill No. 16. The members of the committee will recall that sections 3 and 4 of the bill were allowed to stand in an endeavour to redraft a satisfactory definition for a war patent which would be sufficiently narrow to exclude from its effect all industrial patents which were not intended to be covered. You will find in the reprinted bill which you have before you that subsection (15) of section 19A has been redrawn. In its present form it meets with the approval of the Commissioner of Patents and both of the interested ministers, the Secretary of State and the Minister of National Defence. Subsection (15) is short and I should like to read it.

In order to preserve the safety of the State, the Governor in Council may make rules and regulations for the purpose of insuring secrecy with respect to any application or patent for an invention relating to any instrument or munition of war, considered to be an invention vital to the defence of Canada, and whether assigned under the provisions of this section or not.

Are there any questions in regard to this?

Mr. LESAGE: Would it be more satisfactory if Major Ready were to say a few words as to the necessity for this section? Were there any cases during the war in which you had to force the secrecy of some applications?

Major READY: I am afraid I am not in a position to discuss the technical necessity for it.

The CHAIRMAN: I think, perhaps, the Commissioner of Patents could answer that question.

Major READY: Other than the fact you might want me to quote the cable from England which we received. I have been requested to read a cable which was received on the 17th of March from England and which will show that England as well as the United States is interested in what we are doing with regard to secret patents.

Paragraph 1: In respect to patent security for inventions of minister of supply, understand emergency order 19 expires March 31, 1947.

Paragraph 2: On expiratory present security minister supply anxious ascertain position regarding patents at present prohibited from publication. This has reference to patents which England has forwarded to Canada.

Paragraph 3: Advise will secrecy be maintained on existing cases. Can new secrecy orders be issued after 31st of March.

That relates to patents which they contemplate sending to Canada for the use of the minister.

Subparagraph (c): What safeguards does Canada propose to maintain in respect of patents held under security in U.K. for which corresponding patent applications are filed in Canada.

Paragraph 4: Existing U.K. emergency defence regulations have been extended to the 3rd December, 1947, and may be reviewed at that time.

Paragraph 5: Confirm immediately that no security patent will be released without reference to supply minister.