

*National Battlefields at Quebec*

**Mr. Bell:** Well, section 17 of part III of the Telegraphs Act begins by saying that this part applies to every company, and then goes on to list them. They are in the act now. You are adding paragraph (c), and that is fine, but the other sections of part III of the act which come along from section 18 onwards were drawn up at a time when Newfoundland was not a part of Canada. I maintain that there is some law in those sections concerning Newfoundland as a separate country which is in conflict with the addition you are making to the act. At least, I ask for consideration of that point. I do not want to be dogmatic about it. That is the only point I want to make on it.

**The Deputy Chairman:** If the parliamentary assistant wishes, we could call it six o'clock, and he could answer the question later.

**Mr. Langlois (Gaspé):** I do not think the hon member has clarified the point he wishes to make. However I can assure him that the law officers of our department have thoroughly considered the amendment before submitting it, and I am certain he can take it there is no conflict between the proposed amendment and the existing sections of the Telegraphs Act.

Clause agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

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**AFTER RECESS**

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

**NATIONAL BATTLEFIELDS**

QUEBEC—AMOUNT PAID TO COMMISSION  
INCREASED TO \$125,000

**Hon. Jean Lesage (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources)** moved the second reading of Bill No. 167, to amend an act respecting the national battlefields at Quebec.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Appelwhaite in the chair.

On clause 1—*Payment of \$125,000 a year for four years authorized.*

**Mr. Power (Quebec South):** Mr. Chairman, over a very long period of years I have taken a great interest in the subject matter of the bill now before the house. For that reason I am beholden to thank the minister for the

interest he is taking in this question—and that, notwithstanding his great preoccupation with the enormous task he has before him in the development of those great last frontiers of Canada, the new regions of our north country. I am sure that he, in the interest which he takes in the preservation and conservation of the memorials to those who have gone before us, will find inspiration for himself and his associates in the great task they have undertaken.

My interest, as I have said, creates in my imagination an almost proprietary or vested interest in the objects which are covered by this bill. Back in March of 1920 I moved in the house—

That, in the opinion of this house, the ancient walls and fortifications of the city of Quebec, having for all military purposes become obsolete, it is expedient in order to better preserve these valuable heirlooms as a historical monument for future generations, that their upkeep and control be now vested in the national battlefields commission.

This resolution was repeated on one or more occasions. But in connection with this matter let me say that, as a member of parliament, I went through almost the entire gamut of human emotions. There was fervour, crusading zeal, a certain amount of encouragement, setbacks, small successes, long years of patient waiting, and finally almost partial achievement—and, I regret to say, at the end a good deal of disillusionment.

Encouraged by the somewhat favourable comments of the then existing government, in 1920, I fondly imagined that when a friendly government should come into power what had been encouragement would become decisive action. But, like a great many of that generation following the first war, I was carried away by the slogan that the 1914-18 war had been a war to end all wars. And in my firm belief in that theory I was bold enough, and imprudent enough, to move in 1922 that the estimates of the militia department, including the salaries of the military heads, be considerably curtailed. After that, may I tell the house, the walls still remained in the control of the Department of National Defence, and my most impassioned pleas to preserve their historic interest met with brazen hearts and cold words from the heads of the department.

After a term of years, proceeding along these lines, it occurred to me that the interest which I had intended to suscite might better be covered by an appeal to another element of the thinking of the ministry, the political element. And I raised the question in this house of the possibility—yes, and the probability—that these walls, if their upkeep and fortifications were not kept in proper repair by the Department of National Defence,