

*Public Printing and Stationery Act*

troller of the treasury pays that over to the king's printer, if I understand well the *rouage* of the procedure.

To answer the question asked by the hon. gentleman would be quite difficult because of the constant change in the amount of those accounts collectible by the king's printer. If the hon. gentleman would let this section pass I am sure the king's printer would open the books to him. He could see all the details. I do not think there is any objection to a member of parliament going into the details, but it would be quite cumbersome to come down here with all the books of the king's printer, with the outstanding accounts and so forth. Perhaps I am not reasonable in this, but that is the way it appears to me; and if it had the same effect on the hon. gentleman we would get this bill through.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** I think you are very reasonable. I am only sorry that you thought I was unreasonable. I thought I made my motion in very general terms. I certainly did not want to cause a lot of irksome delay, but at the present time we have no picture, I submit, of what is really happening. We know that this department is owed \$3,750,000 by other departments. We do not know how the payments are made except they seem to be a bit late. We also know that a little over \$1 million in work is done month by month by this department for all other departments. I am frank to say to the Minister of Public Works that as far as I am concerned I would be perfectly satisfied with figures which would indicate in a general way what is happening between this department and the other departments. Anything which would satisfy a reasonable man—I will assume for a moment that I am one—and which would not cause great inconvenience to prepare would satisfy me. It would be in the public interest to have these payments made promptly. It is perfectly obvious at the moment that they are lagging months behind. There may be good reason for that, but up to the moment I have not got it and therefore I am going to let my motion stand.

**Mr. Knowles:** May I make this suggestion. I wonder whether or not we could pass this clause and have third reading stand over to a future sitting of the house. In the meantime the Secretary of State might lay on the table of the house a break-down of that \$3,700,000 figure as of yesterday, and any other statements in that return which might help to answer the questions that have been asked today.

**Mr. Bradley:** I do not think there would be any objection to that.

[Mr. Fournier (Hull).]

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** That fails to cover one thing I have had in the back of my mind. There might be some amount less than \$2 million, perhaps \$1 million additional, that might be adequate. Nothing has been said yet to indicate that this cannot be done. I certainly do not want to be obstructive. If the Minister of Public Works feels that my request is unreasonable, all right; I will let it stand on the suggestion made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** I thank the hon. member for Greenwood for being co-operative. I think it is reasonable that third reading be delayed for some time. The Secretary of State would have the details as to specified dates and as to the outstanding accounts for work in process which cannot be collected immediately by the king's printer. This return could be made to the house before third reading of the bill.

**Mr. Bradley:** There is no objection whatever to that. The only thing I would point out is that if this \$3,700,000 were paid now we would still need \$2 million in order to pay our bills.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** That is not a bit clear.

**Mr. Black (Cumberland):** I have been listening to the discussion, and if anything the hon. member for Greenwood is too reasonable. The minister wants authority to increase the advances by \$2 million. In order to have sufficient knowledge to justify giving our approval we should have the information that is asked for. Now is the time for us to have the information with respect to what the departments owe the king's printer. If the different departments owe \$3,700,000, that must be up to a certain date or the minister would not have come to us with that amount. We understand that it fluctuates from time to time. Now is the time to have the information, not after the bill is passed, to justify us in approving this legislation. We should also have a statement from the minister as to why the king's printer owes \$2 million for supplies. So far as we know they may be owing \$1 million too much. Someone in the department may have ordered much larger stocks than are justified. If that is so, there is no warrant for hon. members to increase the credit of the department to the extent of \$2 million. That is particularly so if the supplies are very much larger than needed. There may be a lot of dead stock in the department. We should have a statement from the minister as to the standing of