

*Bankruptcy Act—Motor Car Insurance*

would have some scientific treatment of the whole of the Act. We ought, if I may suggest this to the Minister of Justice, to allow all these bills to amend the Bankruptcy Act at this session to remain in abeyance, appoint a committee to study the whole matter and then introduce a complete and revised bankruptcy bill which would meet with the views of at least a majority of the people in this country.

Hon. PETER HEENAN (Kenora-Rainy River): I heartily endorse the suggestion made by the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Mackenzie). Wages should take priority over all other claims in a case of bankruptcy. When a firm goes into bankruptcy, probably the last people who know anything about the matter are the workmen in that concern. Others have their legal representatives, and they are fully apprised of what is about to take place before it actually happens. But the poor workmen who are in the employ of that firm have no legal representative; they are working in good faith and their wages should have priority over all other claims. Will the Minister of Justice take this point into consideration?

Mr. GUTHRIE: This discussion is hardly appropriate under the proposal that is introduced by this bill. I realize, however, perhaps as well as anyone in the house, the difficulties, the diversities and I might also say some of the anomalies that are met with in the bankruptcy law in this country and its administration in the various provinces. During the short time that I have occupied the position of Minister of Justice, I have received a great many communications from judges, trustees in bankruptcy, receivers in bankruptcy, legal bodies and associations, chambers of commerce, boards of trade, credit men's associations and the like, all suggesting various changes in the Bankruptcy Act. There is a good deal of force in the suggestion made by the hon. member for Cartier (Mr. Jacobs) that the time is fast approaching, if it is not already here, when there should be something in the nature of a general revision of the act. Upon the whole, I think the public feel that the act has worked well, but there are some difficulties that will have to be smoothed out. It is rather a serious problem to undertake a law for nine provinces where there are provincial jurisdictions which, in many respects, appear to be somewhat conflicting. I have not attempted such a revision during the present session. I have tabulated all the suggestions and all the proposed amendments, and the only amendment which the government has in mind at this session is the present one as incorporated in this measure, to protect in-

[Mr. Jacobs.]

jured parties in respect of insurance in regard to motor accidents, accidents either to the person or to the property of others. I am, however, keeping before me the question of a general revision of the act, and perhaps by next session I may be in a position to introduce such a bill.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Has the minister had any general request to abolish the law?

Mr. GUTHRIE: No, I have not.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Hanson (York-Sunbury) in the chair.

On section 1.—Proceeds of liability insurance policy on motor vehicles applied to claims against debtor.

Mr. JACOBS: Was there any request by any province for the passing of this section?

Mr. GUTHRIE: Yes, directly by the attorney general of Ontario and the judges of the supreme court. One of the judges of the court of appeals, who was appointed a commissioner to inquire into the matter of automobile insurance, largely drew the section. Then from the province of Manitoba from certain associations there, a similar request has come. I assume there must be in Manitoba some provincial law similar to that passed at the last session by the province of Ontario. I cannot at the moment recall similar requests from any other provinces, but a committee of legal men throughout Canada have been writing on the subject, and they have expressed approval of the terminology of this section.

Section agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

## SUPPLY—TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY

Hon. HUGH GUTHRIE (Minister of Justice) moved that the house go into committee of supply.

Mr. J. A. BRADETTE (North Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, before you leave the chair for the house to go into committee of supply, I wish to discuss a matter of national importance, namely, the urgency and necessity of the construction of a trans-Canada highway. Before I proceed with my remarks, I want to make clear that although this problem is contentious in some of its angles, at least it should be kept out of the political arena for the very good reason that during the last election the question was brought up by the party now in power and the