

DEATH THREATS CONANT REASON USING GUARDS

**Accepts Responsibility
as Family's Names
Come Up at Hearing**

Threats on the life of himself and his family and threats to blow up his home were revealed before the Legislature public accounts committee yesterday by Premier Gordon Conant, who appeared to defend his use of Provincial Police cars 360 times in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1942.

Mr. Conant also took full responsibility for use of police cars by Mrs. Conant and his son Roger, whose names had appeared on police garage records and declared them "entirely blameless." He thought that "perhaps I am the victim of my own system" of checking use of cars.

Mr. Conant said that, at the suggestion of Commissioner W. H. Stringer of the Provincial Police, he had had a police guard after threats on the life of himself and his family had been received. That explained, he said, his use of police drivers or uniformed guards. On most occasions when he was credited with use of cars, he said, they were used for departmental business on order of his secretary. In 90 per cent of the cases he never saw the car or rode in it, he told the committee. Many trips, too, had been taken in connection with A.R.P. work and the volunteer civil guard.

For Fishing Trip.

Mr. Conant explained the three-week use of a Provincial Police station wagon by saying that it was used in August partly for a fishing trip to Algonquin Park at a time when things were quiet and with the understanding that the car could be returned at short notice if needed.

He felt, he said, that some latitude should be allowed Ministers in use of cars because of expense involved. He had always paid for his own gasoline and oil and had not used credit cards to get them and in his use of police cars he felt there had been no loss to the Province.

That Mrs. Conant's name had come into the matter he said he found very regrettable as she had been quite innocent and had driven him on public engagements when it was necessary to save his strength. It was unfortunate that cars had been charged to her instead of to him as they should have been. Her trip to Niagara Falls with several other women had been in the interest of the Canadian Women's Volunteer Services and a police car had been used because the Conant family car was tied up at the time.

Son Drove Father.

Roger Conant, his son, the Premier said, had been charged up with cars in which he acted as his father's driver and was in no way responsible. On his short vacation trip when he used a police station wagon Mr. Conant said he paid all expenses.

Police Commissioner W. H. Stringer substantiated Mr. Conant's statement about use of police guards and drivers as being necessary at the time.

With Police Inspector E. Hales in charge of the police garage, Col. Drew reviewed use of cars by members of the Attorney-General's Department. One had been used to transport C. L. Snyder, K.C., Deputy Minister after he had broken his leg. Gasoline used in the cars had been supplied at public expense, he admitted when they were used for messages, etc.