

St. Lawrence are not protected. We have perhaps certain safeguards in the fact that we now technically own the canal, but it is going to cost us a great deal more than necessary to develop it, and our rights in that regard do not seem to be protected under the present arrangements.

Of course the real difficulty is that we and the public generally cannot find out exactly what the present arrangements are. The government in this and some other matters is preserving a secrecy which has hitherto been unknown in public affairs in Canada. They think themselves free to give information or withhold it, and justify their position on the ground that information is not in the public interest. We are not willing to admit that this policy is in the public interest. When the bondholders come to us begging for protection, when we are told that the government itself is constructing a dam which may mean ultimately a very heavy expenditure for a branch canal, it seems as if we are entitled to some statement from the government as to what is going on.

Further than that, it would not seem that the public are protected. There is no indication that the public will be safeguarded in the rates that may be charged in days to come. That protection is taken care of in many affairs, but apparently it is not being given in this case. This great power development would in effect be turned over to the Montreal Light, Heat and Power Consolidated, which for years has so successfully exploited the city of Montreal.

Mr. CHAPLIN: Did the hon. gentleman say that the government was constructing this dam?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I understood from the hon. member for Bow River that a dam had been found necessary and had been constructed under the direction of the department and that this action would make necessary on the part of the government a spur canal in order to make the canal available for navigation purposes.

Further the dominion claims have not been pressed. When this matter was discussed before the supreme court several years ago an excellent case was made out for the right of the dominion to control the canal. I cannot see why this matter could not and should not have been carried further, before handing over the whole enterprise to the province of Quebec. I can remember some years ago reading rather carefully that document, or parts of it, and I found that Hon. Lucien Cannon acting at that time for the dominion, presented what to me as a layman seemed a very

effective case. I cannot see why the present Conservative government should let Quebec have its own way in a matter of that kind. It seems to me the case might have been referred—

Mr. LAPOINTE: Did my hon. friend also read the judgment, which was really the authority?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Yes, I read the judgment, and as I was about to say I cannot see why the case should not have been carried to the privy council, as is done in a great many other cases. Again and again the judgments of our courts have been reversed. I do not think we can take the judgment of the supreme court as final.

Still further, as regards power being exported to the United States, it seems to me that Canadian interests have not been carefully considered. A few years ago it was very generally considered that it was rather a dangerous thing to permit the export of power to the United States. I do not quite see why that export should now be permitted, without careful consideration by the people of Canada. Here again is where I as a layman am somewhat confused. Has the Quebec legislature or the government of Quebec the authority to permit the export of that power?

Mr. CAHAN: It has never assumed that right, nor has it ever suggested it.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Then that power lies here with the Dominion government. Am I right?

Mr. CAHAN: Undoubtedly.

Mr. BENNETT: He has already made a statement on that point, why continue?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I may have been careless, but it has not come to my knowledge that this government has taken a clear cut line in that regard.

Mr. LAPOINTE: A licence has to be issued by this government for the export of any power.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Well I think a statement of government policy should have been made in that regard.

Mr. LAPOINTE: It is in the statute.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: But what is the government doing about it? Are the interests of Canada adequately protected? These are points I want to know something about; I have no knowledge, and I think the public has no knowledge. It seems to me that this is an issue of sufficient importance to be brought to the attention of this house. I know that