

dismantled when the war was over. That is not contemplated, nor indeed would it be a wise procedure.

Mr. HOMUTH: Has any work been proceeded with as yet?

Mr. CRERAR: Yes. Some of the work is being proceeded with under the order in council passed under the War Measures Act about the middle of December last. That was to enable the work to be gone on with at once in order that the power might be available not later than November 1 of the present year.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

PRIVATE BILLS

ONTARIO AND MINNESOTA POWER COMPANY LIMITED

Mr. H. B. McKINNON (Kenora-Rainy River) moved the first reading of Bill No. 26a, respecting the Ontario and Minnesota Power Company Limited.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Explain.

Mr. McKINNON (Kenora-Rainy River): The explanatory notes explain the bill.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): But we have not seen it. The bill is just being introduced.

Mr. McKINNON (Kenora-Rainy River): The Ontario and Minnesota Power Company Limited was given certain rights with regard to power on the Rainy river by a 1905 statute of Canada, 4-5 Edward VII, chapter 139. The company is a subsidiary of Minnesota and Ontario Paper company and is about to be amalgamated with four other subsidiaries of that company. Provision for the amalgamation is made in the plan of reorganization of the parent company which is effective February 28, 1941. Under the amalgamation the financial structure of the five companies will be considerably simplified and one operating organization will carry on all the undertakings of the five companies.

All five subsidiaries being amalgamated are incorporated under the Companies Act (Ontario), and the amalgamation is being effected under that act which provides that the rights and liabilities of the amalgamating companies shall extend to the company formed by the amalgamation.

The purpose of this bill is simply to ensure that the rights and obligations of the Ontario and Minnesota Power Company Limited under the 1905 statute will extend to the amalgamated company.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

PROCEDURE IN DIVORCE LEGISLATION

On the order for first reading of Senate bills:

Mr. SPEAKER: There are a number of divorce bills on the order paper.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Mr. Speaker, is it not possible to make one motion respecting the lot?

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. McIlraith, seconded by Mr. Roebuck, moves that the bills standing on the order paper numbered from 30 to 59 inclusive be now read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Mr. HOMUTH: Does not this look a little like wholesale slaughter of homes? I do not know why the members of this house should sit here and pass on these bills year after year. Surely some better method could be evolved without members of the House of Commons having to sit here and pass these bills wholesale.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend surely realizes that this is but the first reading and does not commit anyone to any principle or to anything else. What has been suggested is but the shortening of a very unpleasant and unprofitable process.

Mr. COLDWELL: Protests have been made in this house from time to time regarding this procedure in relation to divorce bills. I understood last year that some consideration might be given some other method of dealing with these bills. To-day we have a large number and the motion is to give first reading to all of them en bloc. I wish to protest against this method of granting divorces. This ought not to be the function of this house; it is a judicial function. The relief that is requested by act of parliament should be given through a regularly constituted court of law. As a member of this house I do not feel that I ought to take responsibility for voting on these bills as they come before us here without having given some attention to the evidence, and I am quite free to confess that the evidence which comes in an envelope to my office, with a great deal of other material, can only find its way into the waste-paper basket. Someone says "oh", but I believe that is probably what happens to the evidence that goes to many other members.

To my mind this condition is a reflection on the Dominion of Canada, and it ought to be grappled with. Either we are going to grant divorces or we are not, and if we are to have divorces they should be proceeded with in a proper judicial manner and not in this way I wish to protest.