

Dr. Baxter Replies to Veniot's Attack on Grand Falls Policy In Verbal Duel at Legislature

Continued from Page 9

local conditions. For instance at Ottawa power from the Chaudiere hydro is sold for \$13.72 without high tension transmission lines to construct to the border of the city.

PRICES IN NEW BRUNSWICK. "The development of Grand Falls by the government of New Brunswick would permit the sale of hydro at the bus-bar at a price that would not exceed \$14 a horse power. It could be transmitted over the high tension lines to Fredericton, Bathurst, Campbellton, etc., for a good deal less than \$16 a horse power, thus giving to industries horse power at a distance from the power plant at a figure less than \$28 a horse power. Industries today using a combination of hydro and steam generation of electrical power are doing so at a cost far in excess of \$30 per horse power. With such an advantage in favor of Grand Falls development New Brunswick industries could readily compete with similar industries in Quebec or Ontario. When the development would be completed and the high tension lines erected throughout the province, the increasing volume of business would warrant an even lower rate per horse power to industries than that which would be charged in the inception of the enterprise.

DEALS WITH MEASURES. Dealing with the two bills before the House, Hon. Dr. Veniot said: "The bill incorporating the Saint John River Power Company is a distinct departure from the principle of public ownership, inasmuch as it passes the control of the most valuable water power development in this province over to a private corporation.

My intention is to deal with the principle involved in the action of the former Government and the departure therefrom as a result of the decision of the present Government to adopt the policy of private development of our water powers and in doing so review the actions of both the Hydro Commission and the Government in their efforts to convince the public that private ownership is the policy best suited to our province.

TO SIX MONTHS' DELAY. "The much vaunted agreement which would ensure sufficient power to the Fraser Company is also subjected to six months' delay for a final decision. If that agreement has been made as stated by the Premier, why should it be delayed for six months? The time to six months for the signing and delivery of the agreement between the two companies for the sale of power? "We were led to believe that everything was so adjusted that there could be no more delay.

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REPORTS COMPARED. His honorable friend had spent some time in comparing reports made by Mr. H. G. Acres, evidently wishing the inference to be drawn that his report to this government contradicted his former statements. He would say that the value of a report depended upon the facts upon which it was based. From different angles of investigation the two reports quoted might both be accurate. At any rate he could say that the simple reading of the agreement justified Mr. Acres in his report to the present government. The various facts to which his honorable friend had referred in connection with Grand Falls, the present government had had in a most notable form. He had given the various reports in regard to fowage, etc., most careful consideration. In conjunction with the members of the Hydro Commission and the only opinion which could be formed was that Grand Falls could not be developed upon for more than 40,000 horse power.

FACTS ARE DOUBTFUL. Notwithstanding all the evidence which his honorable friend had produced the facts which he presented were in many ways somewhat doubtful, and he (Baxter) considered that this government had not been placed in power to gamble on doubtful facts. Therefore, he said, they were tying this development to definite, well-known facts, the brains of the country it was wrong to entertain definite agreements. His honorable friend had said it was wrong to tie the powers of Grand Falls to a few industries and that it should mainly be reserved to develop all sorts of industries, large or small, throughout the province. He maintained, however, that he did not stress

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GIVING AWAY ASSET. "The province is giving away a valuable asset and has nothing whatever to say in its administration or future actions without the consent of this company. Even in the matter of the amount of energy reserved for the use of the province there shall be no regulatory jurisdiction except with the consent of the company. Is it possible to more securely tie the hands of the province?"

"But let me further point out that section 25 defines to what use the quantity of energy reserved to the province shall be put. Why not go one step further and complete the farce by giving this company control of the government?"

"OUTRAGEOUS CLAUSE." "But one of the most outrageous clauses in the bill is to be found in section 22, where, in the event of the province desiring to develop any water powers below the Grand Falls, on the Saint John River, the province shall pay tribute to this company at a rate not to exceed \$2 per horse power for benefits accruing to such development as a result of the development at Grand Falls. Surely such a clause will never be enacted. Is this what the Premier meant when he assured the House that the interests of the province would be fully protected? Why should we give away right and franchise and then be required to pay dearly for benefits that may accrue from the extremely generous action of the government?"

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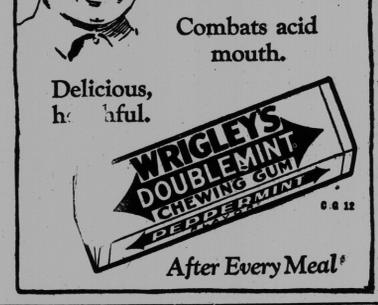
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