

view, and I am doing so without very close investigation of the facts of the case; I am not even saying that I would not change my mind if sufficiently cogent reasons were given. It may be that I am all wrong in my belief, but that is my own personal view at the present time; and entertaining that view I look upon the deepening of the Welland canal as the first link in the system connecting the Great Lakes with the seaboard.

As I understand the present proposal, it is not to build the Georgian Bay canal, it is only to construct a section of what would ultimately be the canal from the Georgian bay to lake Nipissing. As I said before the probable cost would be twenty or twenty-five million dollars for an electrical development of about twenty thousand horsepower.

Mr. PROULX: What is the distance from the Georgian bay to lake Nipissing?

Mr. CARVELL: The distance between North Bay and the Georgian bay is eighty-one miles. North Bay is on the eastern side of the lake, and I do not know exactly, but it would be probably fifty or sixty miles from the Georgian bay to lake Nipissing.

I hope that my hon. friend (Mr. Harrison) will not feel that as a Government we are turning down the scheme at all. I am only saying that as far as I am concerned I do not feel like going to such an expenditure of money this year without knowing a little bit more about what the ultimate financial condition of Canada is going to be. I know that if we attempt to build this work we have got to borrow money. We are obliged to borrow three or four hundred million dollars this year, for finishing the war, that we cannot get away from; and I have very grave doubts whether we would be justified in starting out to borrow twenty or twenty-five million dollars additional for a local work such as this is. At the same time it is part of a great scheme which it may be, that in another year Government or Parliament may decide to be a proper thing to undertake. If so I will only be too happy to be governed by what the majority of Parliament may think about it.

But it does seem to me that we have got to put the brakes on somewhere, and I would like to see them put on a little harder in a good many spots than they are being put on at the present time in connection with the expenditure of borrowed money.

[Mr. Carvell.]

Mr. PROULX: Without wishing to interrupt the hon. minister I want to ask one question. What has become of the commission that was appointed to study the question of the Georgian Bay canal which Mr. Sanford Evans reported on?

Mr. CARVELL: Mr. Sanford Evans was appointed and got his salary for four or five years. He made a report, which has been printed and distributed, I presume, and he ceased to be in the employ of the Government something over a year ago.

Mr. DEVLIN: Are the other officials of that commission still in office or have they completed their work?

Mr. CARVELL: I do not think there are any other officials of that commission still in office. If there are any the fact has not been brought to my attention.

Mr. DEVLIN: The secretary drew two or three thousand dollars up to last year. I do not know whether he is still drawing a salary.

Mr. CARVELL: I am not aware of it. It may be possible; I will investigate. If there are any officials on that commission who are not earning their salaries I will try and find other work for them to do, or see that they do not draw any more money. I am informed the commission was closed up two years ago, and I think there is no reason to question that there are no persons now drawing pay from the Government in respect of that commission.

Mr. H. M. MOWAT (Parkdale): Mr. Speaker, while I am not so bold as to think that anything I can say will alter the intention of the Government as expressed by the hon. the Minister of Public Works, at the same time it should be pointed out that this important project has been before the people of this North country and the Boards of Trade of Ontario for a great many years. I am told that they retained some very competent engineers and electricians to report on the project, and that their figures differ from those upon which the hon. minister relies, and which he is no doubt entitled to rely upon being those of his officials. But as long as this difference exists in those figures I am tempted to tell the people up there that they must not despair of this project being undertaken eventually, especially in view of the statement made by the hon. minister that he is not turning it down, but simply presents the formidable financial difficulties that are now in the way. What the engineers say is that not twenty-two or twenty-five thousand, but