

As far as the legislation based upon it is concerned, it must be within the memory of members of this house that I said if the temper of the house indicated a willingness to proceed with the legislation before adjournment I thought it was desirable to do so, but I had no desire to push it forward; for in this instance I look upon the government as being but a trustee charged with responsibility in connection with a great property. Carrying into effect the suggestion made by the president of the Canadian National Railways at the time, we appointed a commission consisting not all of Canadians, one of them being one of the most distinguished organizing brains in Great Britain, Lord Ashfield; another the president of a railroad, small in length it is true, but regarded as one of the foremost railway executives in the United States, Mr. Loree. These gentlemen, with Canadians, constituted a commission which arrived at a unanimous report. My duty then of course was to submit to this house in a concrete form that the house would be able to understand, the recommendations and suggestions made, not as a party measure in the narrow sense of that term, but that as we, charged with enormous responsibility in regard to something that threatens the very financial life of this country, at the rate of \$5,000,000 per month, might determine whether or not the recommendations and the suggestions of the commission could be carried into effect. After the house has arrived at a definite conclusion with respect to the report I thought it desirable that the bill should be ready so that the house might proceed to enact the legislation if in the judgment of the house it will meet the difficulties we have to meet. I thought I had made it reasonably clear the other day that there was no desire on our part to do other than act as the medium through which the report of the committee could be made available to this house in the form of a concrete measure, namely a bill, which represented the recommendations unanimously made by the commission.

As far as the St. Lawrence waterway is concerned, the right hon. gentleman is somewhat vague in his observations. We have pointed out that in this instance the treaty which has been signed and laid upon the table of the house is to be adopted by the United States before it is submitted to this parliament. If that is not a reasonable precaution to take under the circumstances, I will stand censured.

Mr. DUFF: That is settled, they will never adopt it.

[Mr. Bennett.]

Mr. BENNETT: I am glad the hon. gentleman is so satisfied of the excellence of the arrangement made that he thinks the other party to it will not adopt it. At any rate, leaving that for the moment, I make this further observation; when it was said that it was at variance with the Winnipeg platform I think perhaps the hon. gentleman and those who applauded him are not fully aware of, or have not studied as carefully as they should, the provisions of the document in question; for it provides that the rights of this country are so secure that if at any time we desire to construct a canal all on our own territory we may do so, notwithstanding the provisions of the treaty. But having regard to existing conditions the provisions are that there should be a lock on either side, so that it cannot be said that supremacy had been yielded either to one country or the other. And further it was thought, as the engineers reported in days gone by and as they reported more recently, that if the work was to be proceeded with within a reasonable time the provisions with respect to overcoming the rapids in the international section by two dams was the most economical and safest, and the one that commended itself to the judgment of technical experts as being the soundest. But provision has been made as I have indicated. And what is more, the sovereignty of this country with respect to every inch of soil and every drop of water it now possesses has been reserved in its entirety.

As far as the pensions matter is concerned I only desire to make this observation; the pensions committee that sat in 1930 was not a partisan committee. It was composed of members from both sides of the house, principally men who had served in the forces. It has been said that the working of the Pensions Act which resulted from the report of that committee has not been entirely satisfactory. In order that there might be the fullest possible opportunity to ascertain the views of those who are most directly concerned, a committee was set up by order in council under the chairmanship of the Hon. Mr. Justice Rinfret, who with a high sense of public service expressed a willingness to head that committee, and who is giving such excellent service to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. The endeavour is to prevent something that this house in times gone by has expressed itself as desirous of preventing, the attempt to make it appear that you are my friend, not someone else, and that the dispassionate findings of a committee composed of men who are directly affected as far as the administration of the act is concerned, presided over