

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

want to ask the minister if he has any comments to make on General McNaughton's charges as reported in the *Citizen* this afternoon.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I do not think it would be appropriate at this stage for me to make any extended comment on this matter. I do not think, strictly speaking, it arises on this item, which is one in respect of engineering services retained in connection with the making of a report—a report which has since been made public and with which I am sure the hon. member is familiar.

With regard to the article which the hon. member has read, I have not seen it myself, and I think, in fairness, I should not attempt to comment on it in an extended way until I have actually seen it. It is well known, I believe, that General McNaughton and the international joint commission were in touch at all times with the negotiations which led up to the treaty being signed. The view that General McNaughton held originally was one which preferred a different type of undertaking with respect to certain of the courses and reservoirs. My information is that since it was not possible to bring about agreement on the basis which General McNaughton favoured it was necessary, as so often happens, to accept something different.

Here were two governments of two sovereign countries negotiating. Neither one of them could have its own way in all matters, and in the end the particular way which General McNaughton favoured was not possible because there could never have been an agreement between the two countries on that basis. My information is that, no agreement being possible on the basis which he would have preferred, General McNaughton went along then with the proposals which were developed as a substitute. Certainly his advice was made available on that basis.

No one questions the right of General McNaughton to retain his view that something different would have been better, but the fact is that the course he favoured could not have been the subject of agreement. Various differences were made the subject of negotiation and in the end a treaty was arrived at on the only basis which proved to be possible.

**Mr. Herridge:** I do not wish to take up the time of the committee on this problem now because I am sure the subject will be discussed throughout the country in view of the great respect in which General McNaughton's views are held. However, I am interested in what the minister has to say because I was reliably informed that the change of direction occurred on the insistence of the government of British Columbia which wanted to

build a high dam as against the sequence proposed by General McNaughton.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Let me clear up that question. The views of the government of British Columbia certainly entered into this. There were three governments involved all of which had views as to the optimum course. What was achieved in the end was the only basis on which agreement could be reached.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Shall vote 729 carry?

**Mr. Chevrier:** If I may, I should like to revert for just a moment to the matter which I raised originally. I should like to commend the government. I do not do that very often. However, I should like to commend the government in connection with their decision to establish a full time office located at Cornwall, the primary duties of which are concerned with the objectives involved in the regulation of the St. Lawrence flows having in mind all of the criteria which the international joint commission and the two federal governments have laid down for the protection of the interests all the way from lake Ontario to Montreal harbour.

The minister will probably remember that the board of control was established by order of the international joint commission to supervise during construction the works of both power and navigation in the international section and also to supervise water limits and the flows from lake Ontario downstream. I have no hesitation in saying this.

Had we been in office, having established this board originally and having located the survey headquarters at Cornwall we would have wanted to set up an office to carry out the responsibilities after construction, as has been done under the circumstances. I am grateful to the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources who was good enough to advise me that this was being done. In fact, I understand now that it has been done and that there is an office with a staff comprised of some four or five technical personnel, with one engineer in charge, whose duties and responsibilities are to supervise water levels and the flow of water. That is a decision which is all to the good. I think it will have a great bearing and influence on the implementation of the plan which was established by the board of control, and any amended plan. The minister, of course, said he did not have his officers with him here and could not give me details of whether or not the plan had been amended. I understand that it has been amended. Perhaps, he can tell me in what manner it has been amended. I think, however, the decision to have a technical