

It is believed that this bill represents an important advance for assistance in the development of the great natural wealth which lies in the Northwest Territories. Numerous mining and other enterprises can and will be stimulated if power is made available at low cost.

Mr. MacNICOL: Mr. Chairman, I wish to support this program of a commission for the governmental production of electricity in the Northwest Territories. I have always felt that the power should belong to the people in those territories, and this is a step in that direction. I hope that the personnel of the commission will include at least one engineer, preferably one who is thoroughly conversant with power production. There are to be three commissions, I understand.

Mr. MacKINNON: Provision is made for three, but one is to be appointed to start with.

Mr. MacNICOL: I hope that the commission when it is set up will make a survey of all the Northwest Territories with a view to ascertaining the possible power developments in the area. The minister spoke of the Snare river area, where just one power development is to be made.

Mr. MacKINNON: To start with.

Mr. MacNICOL: There are two or three more possible power developments on the Snare river, the power potential of which is about 35,000 horsepower, of which the present development will produce 8,000 horsepower, to be transmitted by wires principally to the Yellowknife area where the mines are in operation.

I should like to see the commission make a survey of the east end of Great Slave lake and Lockhart river. That may be called after the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Lockhart); if it is not, it could well be, since the name is the same. The Lockhart river drains Artillery lake, and, after a series of rapids and falls, finally falls into Great Slave lake. That river has a potential, I believe, of 150,000 horsepower, which can be developed at three heads, each of which is capable of developing a substantial block of power. The potential power there will be under the commission, will it not?

Mr. MacKINNON: Yes.

Mr. MacNICOL: Likewise on the Thelon river there is the possibility of developing power. I hope the commission will survey these possibilities and then consider the territory north of the Yellowknife, to the east of Great Bear lake, on the Coppermine river at what is known as Bloody falls—a very beautiful falls, of which I have a picture. There is a

[Mr. MacKinnon.]

natural power site. The river turns around like a hook before it goes over the falls.

In the far north country I imagine that the question of precipitation would be important, because the land there is dry, and the flow of the river would have to be carefully surveyed before any attempt was made to develop power from that water. But away to the west, over on the Mackenzie river, I saw what I thought was an excellent power site at Sans Sault, north of Norman Wells, and before you come to Fort Good Hope. The river, which is two or three miles wide above that, is reduced to about 1,500 feet where it bursts through the mountains. Previously the mountains are on the right side of the river as you go north but they cross the river at Sans Sault. In my opinion a gigantic power plant could be built on that site if the time ever came for it to be constructed. I am anxious that the government should have possession of the power facilities at Sans Sault, which in my opinion would amount to not less than half a million horsepower.

In a word, I for one am pleased to see the government taking control of all the power potentialities of the Northwest Territories for future public development. If they follow the same program that has been followed by the hydroelectric commission of Ontario, and keep the cost down, they will be able to sell power to the miners in that country at a reasonable rate. Nothing will develop a country more rapidly than cheap power. It has to be produced by one of four methods: water, coal, oil, or gas. That country has so much water power on hand that it will produce electric power for a long time to come.

I do not need to say anything further. I am supporting the bill, and wish the commission that is to be appointed every success in developing that great country which is overflowing with incomparable resources, minerals of every description. With other power plants east, west and north to supplement this one, perhaps before many years Canada will learn that in these so-called barren lands to the far north there lie minerals out of which we will reap a harvest such as no other country possesses. With that power will come an influx of population such as has not been dreamed of. There is nothing like electricity to make life worth living. I for one support the bill.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): I have listened as carefully as I could to the minister's remarks. As I understood him, there was a reference to rates. There was a bit of noise in the chamber at the time and I may not have caught him correctly. I understood him to say that these rates were to be such as to take care of the carrying charges of the plants.