

7 GEORGE V, A. 1917

the whole province of Ontario is supporting this amendment. This amendment is asked in the interests of the investment which has been made by the municipalities.

Mr. CARVELL: After the other investment had been made by this company, and in face of that investment.

Mr. MACLEAN: Granting that, they have made their investments, and while you say you are maintaining your rights you are putting your company in a position to confiscate all the rights of others who happen to be interested, and these people happen to be municipalities of Ontario.

Mr. NESBITT: Where?

Mr. MACLEAN: All over Ontario.

Mr. SINCLAIR: The objection by some members of the Committee is to the retroactive feature of the section which affects only the city of Toronto.

Mr. MACLEAN: If it is not made clear, as it is made clear in the amendment, that the rights of everybody are respected, a lot of rights will be confiscated.

Mr. NESBITT: Mr. Johnston's resolution covers that effectively.

Mr. MACLEAN: Mr. Carvell, while he says he is protecting the investment of some individuals, is invading the rights of the municipality; why put them in a false position?

Mr. SINCLAIR: I have no clients who are interested in this matter to the extent of one cent, and I have no prejudices against the Hydro-Electric Company. All I know about that company is that it is a useful institution, and I would like to have one in my province. I believe in municipal control, but I do not believe in the right of any company to go into the streets of any town or municipality and put up wires or poles without the consent of the municipality. I will vote in accordance with that principle on every occasion, but I do not like the retroactive feature of this measure and that is the reason why I am going to record my vote against it.

Hon. Mr. COCHRANE: My justification for taking the position I do is that I think the Parliament of Canada did wrong in giving the company these powers. They did an injustice to the different municipalities in the provinces of Canada, and I think it is the duty of this Parliament to mend that wrong.

Mr. NESBITT: So far as I am personally concerned, I have nothing but the strongest feeling of friendship towards the Hydro-Electric. They operate splendidly, so far as I know, throughout the length and breadth of Ontario, but the Act as drawn protects the municipalities without any additional sections.

Hon. Mr. COCHRANE: It does, except in regard to this company. It will not protect the municipalities from this company.

Mr. NESBITT: Pardon me, I think it does. I could not agree with you in that statement.

Hon. Mr. COCHRANE: I am so advised.

Mr. NESBITT: It absolutely protects all the municipalities for the future from this or any other company.

Mr. MACLEAN: The Ontario Government, which is supposed to be the guardian of provincial rights, says the municipalities are not protected, and Ontario has been represented before this Committee for that reason.

Mr. NESBITT: The Ontario Government say they were not protected previously, but they cannot say they are not now protected, because it is distinctly shown by Mr. Johnston, the adviser of the Committee, that they are protected both in the interpretation section, and in the section in question.

Mr. JOHNSTON, K.C.: As to the future.

Mr. NESBITT: I am talking of the future, and these people have no right in any place except Toronto at the present time. There is no question about that.