

The Address—Mr. H. J. Flemming

United States contemplates as part of the project a dam and power development on the upper Saint John river which will, without any development at Mactaquac, greatly increase production capacity of the plants now in being at Grand Falls and Beechwood, with 50 per cent of the downstream benefits going to the New Brunswick electric power commission free, with the probability of purchasing from the United States 50 per cent of these same benefits at a very attractive price, and with the suggested proposal to sell Quoddy power at something like four mills, which is a matter of public knowledge. Does this not add up to an argument for further examination before embarking on this venture?

That is not all. I have in my hand a report to the Chignecto canal committee made by the Hon. Louis J. Robichaud, premier of New Brunswick, who was chairman of that committee. May I say to this house—and I will only read two short paragraphs of the report—that this is a stupendous undertaking. The report says:

(4) The preliminary estimate of capital cost for the total installation of 900,000 kilowatts (450,000 kilowatts each at the outlet of Shepody and Cumberland basin) amounts to \$325 million, excluding interest during construction.

(5) The preliminary studies show that 5.5 billion kilowatt hours per year could be generated from the 900,000 kilowatts of installed capacity at the Cumberland-Shepody sites.

This is a matter which has been brought to the attention of this house many times by my hon. friend from Cumberland (Mr. Coates) in his capacity of great prominence in the committee. Here are the assumed costs. I agree that these are not the result of years of study but they are the result of an examination of records which are available at this time.

It indicates that Shepody will cost 5.13 mills, the Cumberland basin 4.67 mills and the combined Shepody-Cumberland 4.90 mills. With the \$20 million available, is it not a reasonable proposition to say that we might properly stop, look, examine and investigate all angles? Because once the damage is done it cannot be undone. Once the heritage of that beautiful river, the scenery along the river and the attraction it has for many people are destroyed, these things can never be replaced. There is no recovery. I have not even mentioned the Hamilton falls in Labrador and its seven million kilowatts of firm power which presumably could be made available. I have not mentioned atomic power, one ingredient of which is being made in the form of heavy water, or will be very soon, at a plant in Cape Breton at public expense. I have not mentioned the fact that the Nova Scotia-New Brunswick grid system is available to receive power in either of these provinces. I would

assume that the \$20 million grant from the Atlantic development board is available for cheap power in New Brunswick wherever and in whatever way it may be practicable; and the New Brunswick electric power commission have only to satisfy the technical officials of the board that the grant is economically justified and feasible. I urge the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill), in his capacity of answering to parliament for the Atlantic development board, to investigate all of the aspects of this huge development I have just mentioned so that no mistakes can possibly be made.

There are many matters, Mr. Speaker, in the speech from the throne to which I would be glad to give more attention, and about which I would be very pleased to offer some opinions. However, time does not permit and so I will resume my seat, and I thank the house for its indulgence.

Mr. Winch: Mr. Speaker, could I ask a question?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think I should bring to the attention of the house the fact that the hon. member's time has expired, and unless there is unanimous consent no question could be asked of the hon. member now.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Has the hon. member consent? Agreed.

Mr. Winch: Mr. Speaker, in view of the hon. member's statements over the last 10 minutes, will he explain to the house what he recommends should now be done which was not done when he was a cabinet minister?

Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, as is well known to everyone developments in connection with many matters, including electrical energy, are taking place from time to time. This is a new situation which has developed recently from the need for power in the province of New Brunswick. I am making no criticism of the fact that there is need for this power; what I am saying is that there should be a careful examination into all its angles before this specific project is entered into. It is not a question which came before the government of which I was a member.

Mr. Mullally: May I ask a question? Did I interpret the remarks of the hon. member correctly in assuming that he was opposed to the Saint John river project? Is that correct?

Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, there was nothing in what I said which would lend itself to any such opinion. If the hon. gentleman has any doubts he can read what I said in tomorrow's *Hansard*.