

Northwest Territories Power Commission

what the present situation is and, in particular, whether there are now any international complications; in other words, can he tell us whether the development is held up pending some arrangement with the United States about the use of the Yukon river? My understanding was that this scheme involved the large area which comprises the headwaters of the Yukon river not only in the Yukon but also in British Columbia. Evidently there has been some hitch in the development. It would be helpful if the minister could tell us what is the situation.

Another point is this. Has any thought been given to the use of atomic power plants in northern Canada? The minister mentioned that some of these plants are producing power from coal. We have read in the press about the possibility of using atomic energy plants in that particular part of the nation. I wonder if the minister could tell us whether this power commission has the authority itself to instal atomic energy power plants, and whether the minister considers that they will be feasible in that territory?

Mr. Lesage: In reply to the second question, according to my information the possibility of using atomic energy plants for generating electricity is under constant study, but the cost of such installations is so high at the present time that they could not compete with other forms of power for generating electricity.

Mr. Green: Even in northern Canada?

Mr. Lesage: Even in northern Canada, at least where the commission is operating. That is the answer. The commission can supply electricity, even in Aklavik, by the use of coal and oil much cheaper than it can by using atomic energy plants. We hope, of course, that atomic energy will be cheaper in the coming years so we can use it for developing electric power.

In so far as the Frobisher plan is concerned, it has not been shelved. Surveys will be conducted this summer. A note just came to my desk a few moments ago concerning this

subject. It says that drilling operations are now proposed at the Miles canyon dam site, the tunnel invert sites at the end of Atlin lake and at Sloko lake and also at the site of the tunnel outfall of Nakonake valley as well as at the power house site and diversion dam site. All those surveys are going to proceed this year in connection with the Frobisher project which involves the diversion of the headwaters of the Yukon river.

Mr. Green: Are the Frobisher people giving consideration to establishing any smaller plants in the Yukon in the meantime?

Mr. Lesage: Not in the Yukon, but they are going on with the Naas river project, as the hon. member is aware, in British Columbia. Of course, even the construction phase of the Frobisher plan will take a number of years, but the needs of Whitehorse for additional power are immediate. It is for that reason the power commission is making these surveys, in order to start the development of a hydro plant north of Whitehorse as early as possible this summer. This, of course, could easily be co-ordinated with any development of the Frobisher project which would affect Whitehorse in later years.

Resolution reported and concurred in.

Mr. Lesage thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 250, to amend the Northwest Territories Power Commission Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we shall take the resolution in my name and the resolution in the name of the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys; then the resolution with respect to additional judges; then second reading of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act and second reading of the National Housing Act.

At six o'clock the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to standing order.