

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: Amendments have been coming over since the other House met.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: Information has been received indicating that section 2 of Bill 143 has been amended in another place to read:

The Beauharnois Light, Heat and Power Company, Limited, its successors or assigns, in so far as it may be within the competence of Parliament, is hereby granted the right to divert from Lake St. Francis up to but not exceeding 53,072 cubic second feet of water of the flow of the River St. Lawrence, to be returned to Lake St. Louis and to be used for the development of hydro-electric power between the two said points, in such manner, upon such terms and conditions and with such limitations and reservations as may be prescribed by Order of the Governor in Council.

And the first word of section 3, the word "no," is stricken out, as well as the words "shall be made by said company," and some words are added. That section now reads:

The Governor in Council shall not consent to any further or additional diversion by the said company of water of the River St. Lawrence except with the express approval of Parliament.

These amendments seem to be in accordance with my right honourable friend's suggestions.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: It is unfortunate that we did not have the Bills as amended. Evidently every point that I have taken has been recognized.

Hon. Mr. BELCOURT: Honourable members, I have no brief for the company, and am not concerned about it at all. It can look after its own rights. With regard to the rights of the Province of Quebec, I am not entirely of the same opinion as my right honourable friend (Right Hon. Mr. Graham). I do not think that section 3 of Bill 144 in any way affects the rights of the Province of Quebec in this undertaking. That section confers upon the Governor in Council the authority to acquire by purchase or otherwise such lands and works as may be deemed necessary. That is merely authority to acquire. The Bill declares the works to be for the general advantage of Canada. I suppose the Province of Quebec will be dealt with properly. The Governor in Council may be authorized to exercise certain powers, but that does not confer any right in the property. In the same way a company may be given authority to build a railway, but the company would not thereby acquire the title to lands; such title could be acquired only from the owners. I am not apprehensive that section 3 of Bill 144 will in any way affect the rights

of the Province of Quebec. They will remain as they are. But I do think we ought to protect the rights of third parties who have had dealings with this company and may be concerned by the fact that the agreement between the company and the authorities at Ottawa will be cancelled by this legislation.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: As the Bill originally read, it raised the question whether Quebec had any rights.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: It may be interesting for my honourable friend the senior member for Ottawa (Hon. Mr. Belcourt) to know that I heard it announced in the other House this afternoon that an eminent lawyer, who has been looking after the interests of the Quebec Government, assisted in the drafting of these two Bills. It is to be assumed that they are satisfactory to the Quebec Government, whose rights it is intended to preserve in their entirety.

Hon. Mr. BELCOURT: I have no apprehension in that regard.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: The Attorney General of Quebec asked for the amendment.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: It might be further observed, by reference to the committee's report, that it very clearly indicates that the work is not to be interfered with any more than is absolutely necessary. It is to be carried on by the present company if they are able to finance it, or by such other financial arrangements as may be necessary, either by way of public ownership or by way of corporation ownership. I do not remember the exact words of the report, but they can be referred to. Further, it seems evident that the rights of the people who are carrying on the construction are to be preserved if they are able to do their part to complete it, and the committee seemed to make it abundantly clear by its recommendations that in any case the rights of investors who have purchased the bonds that have been sold are to be amply protected. This legislation was based on the committee's report, which was adopted in another place without division.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: I know I am out of order. We all are. I should infer that this may be government ownership or it may not be.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: That is it.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: In Ontario they may rejoice that it is going to be public ownership, and in Quebec that it may not be.