

a Bill deals with an important matter of public policy, whether it be introduced by a private member or not, we must look to the Government of the day to approve of it or not to approve of it; to accept it or to reject it. I think it is its duty and responsibility to the country not to let such an important Bill become law unless it has merit.

I do not know whether my honourable friend (Hon. Mr. Bureau) intended to suggest such a thing or not, but in my judgment there can be no reflection on the Governor in Council, for the reason I have just stated, and for the further reason that if the Bill does pass and some question arises in regard to the export of electrical power, any proposition submitted to Parliament must come through the Governor in Council. The Governor in Council will advise Parliament; the Governor in Council will give Parliament information; Parliament will look to the Governor in Council for guidance and information and counsel on the subject. After all, the Governor in Council is but an integral part of Parliament, a Committee of Parliament; and I hope that this Chamber will not in its mind divorce the Governor in Council from Parliament, because the two are part of the one system which controls public business in this country. As I see it, we have before us a Bill dealing with an important public question, the whole principle of which is whether or not we shall provide for the future an additional safeguard, if you like to call it that, by allowing Parliament to take back into its own hands the control of the issuing of licenses for the export of power. That is the fundamental principle of the Bill.

The provisos, as honourable members no doubt have observed, deal with licenses already issued. They provide that the Governor in Council shall continue, if well advised, to renew or cancel wholly or in part any of those licenses, and may either authorize an increase or grant a license for the purpose of meeting temporary emergencies. That part of the Bill, I am informed, was put in specially at the instance and direction of the Government of the day; and I think the other Chamber, so directed and so advised, took a very wise course.

My honourable friend has moved an amendment which would fix a date—1935, if I remember rightly—when the Governor in Council would cease to exercise this power. I submit that we are taking a very important and very prudent step when we re-invest Parliament with power in regard to licenses; I further submit that we are also taking a very wise and very prudent step when we

leave the Governor in Council, for the present at least, to deal with the licenses which have been issued. We have had a statement submitted by the honourable leader of the House, who is now absent, showing the licenses that have been issued. I am convinced that those licenses, the circumstances surrounding them, and the conditions under which they were issued, require careful and perhaps prolonged study, and that we are not at this moment in a position to deal with them summarily, but should be on far safer ground if we accepted the proposition which I understand came from the Government of the day, and which is embodied in these two provisos that my honourable friend opposite proposes to amend.

I do not know that there is anything further that I can add to the discussion at this stage. I do not know whether I have convinced my honourable friend that it is not necessary for us to adhere to the policy of 1907, or that we are not stepping on to dangerous ground at all. I hope that he will see that it is sufficient for the day to take the one step, namely, to re-invest the authority in Parliament for the future, leaving it with the Governor in Council to deal with the licenses already issued.

Hon. Mr. BEIQUE: Honourable gentlemen, on a previous occasion, in Committee of the Whole, I stated that as far as I was concerned I had not sufficient information regarding the Bill to enable me to arrive at a judgment. I suggested that the leader of the Government should obtain a list of the different companies exporting power, the quantity of power exported, the price at which it was sold on the other side of the line, and the terms of the contract. Honourable members of this House will find some statistical tables on page 208 of Hansard, but the answer to my question is not there. I think that it is essential to any member of this House, in order to pass judgment on the Bill, to know the terms of each contract; and there are other important terms besides the quantity of power exported and the price at which it is sold. I refer especially to the terms governing the right of renewal, whether by license or otherwise. In the absence of this information I shall be unable to pass judgment on the Bill.

I attach a great deal of importance to the subject dealt with by this measure. I doubt whether we in this country realize the magnitude of the national wealth represented by electric or hydraulic power. I think we should realize not only the value of the power itself, but the national wealth which is involved in