

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

August 12, 1946.

The Standing Committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines met this day at 3.30 o'clock p.m. The Chairman, Mr. L. O. Breithaupt, presided.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, if you will come to order we will consider Bill No. 345. The reference is that the following bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraphs: Bill 345. An Act respecting the construction of a line of railway by Canadian National Railway company from Barraute to Kiask Falls on the Bell River, in the province of Quebec.

The Minister of Transport is here. Is there anything you wish to say, Mr. Chevrier?

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, there is nothing I wish to say more than this, that the bill has been referred to this committee by the House of Commons sitting in committee of the whole. The members will remember that the bill has to do with the construction of a branch line from Barraute on the National Transcontinental to a place called Kiask Falls—a branch line fifty-five miles in length. The projected line is in the Abitibi country, about 400 miles west and north of Quebec city. I outlined the facts concerning the authority that is sought by parliament for the construction of this branch line—and I do not want to repeat them—as well as the policy of the Canadian National Railway when lines of this sort are built, and I referred also to the guarantee by the Canada Paper Company for a portion of the projected line. The bill was referred to this committee, and there are witnesses here who will explain this matter to you: Mr. Fairweather, Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Rosevere of the Canadian National Railways. They are prepared to answer any questions if the committee is ready to discuss the bill clause by clause.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you wish to hear Mr. Fairweather and get some detailed description of the line, or do you wish to discuss the bill clause by clause?

Mr. WHITMAN: Let us hear Mr. Fairweather.

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: I think it would be advisable if we could hear evidence from Mr. Fairweather.

The CHAIRMAN: None of us knows very much about this matter, and I think it is desirable to call Mr. Fairweather. Would you proceed, Mr. Fairweather?

Mr. S. W. Fairweather, Vice-President, Research and Development Department, Canadian National Railways, called:

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, this area of northern Quebec which is proposed to be developed by the branch line under consideration is an area of rather extensive and diversified natural resources. It is an area which