

St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act

Mr. Chevrier: That is something.

Mr. Small:—after having done a good job. However, I think there should be a searching examination in the department of the government or in the seaway authority to find out who is responsible. I suppose you might properly term it an abortion as far as the Welland canal is concerned. I think we should find out who is responsible for advising the administration at that time. Then we should look them over and, if we find who were responsible for advising the St. Lawrence seaway authority we should then get rid of the whole caboodle of them and employ a new lot who will do a better job. Under these conditions, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that this whole matter, after this resolution has been passed, be sent to a committee. I go along with the hon. member for Vancouver East that this matter be sent to the public accounts committee in order to give us a chance to see if we can ferret out the responsible party.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Chairman, I have listened with great care to the arguments that have been advanced by certain hon. gentlemen in the committee this afternoon and really I am amazed by some of those statements. I am amazed—and I say this respectfully—at the lack of knowledge displayed by certain hon. members of the statute itself and of other public documents having to do with this project. Notwithstanding the fact that I had dealt at great length during the course of the afternoon with the manner in which costs had been increased, it never occurred to any hon. gentlemen on the other side of the house to see where the responsibility, if any, lay other than to direct it toward the hon. member for Laurier.

Mr. McPhillips: You sat on it for years.

Mr. Chevrier: All right. I am willing to deal with my responsibilities and I am willing to accept them, but I am not willing to sit in the house and listen to some of the inaccurate charges that have been made during the course of the afternoon and I expect to be able to establish the fact that they are inaccurate in the course of the next few minutes. Notwithstanding that hon. members have pointed in this direction, nobody has said a word about the fact that power costs have increased from almost \$400 million to \$600 million. Notwithstanding that Canada was responsible in its application to the international joint commission for that aspect of the project as well as for the navigational aspect. I refer again to the application which was made by Canada jointly with the United States to the international joint commission and which deals with an application, not for navigation but for power development in the

international section and which in section 8 sets out the manner in which that power development shall be built and shall be produced. It follows almost word for word this public document which was circulated for years by the Department of Transport. How is it that from the time—and I am going to come back to 1922 in a moment—this document dated 1949 was published until this date, and from the time the application was made to the international joint commission in 1952, no one has said anything in connection with the estimate of costs prepared by Canada, prepared by the engineering branch of the Department of Transport and which at that time indicated that the power costs would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$400 million to \$420 million. While we do not know what they will be now, they will probably be in the neighbourhood of \$600 million without having any regard to interest during construction. Are you going to direct your finger at me because of these increases of close to \$200 million? Are you going to direct your indignation at the hon. member for Laurier or at the federal government? If you are I have no objection, because the persons and the division responsible for the preparation of those costs are the same as those responsible for the preparation of the seaway costs.

I want to deal with the hon. member for Carleton, who, to say the least, has made very strange charges in this house. I can hardly believe that a man of his integrity would rise in this house and during the course of the afternoon, for almost 30 minutes, make the charges which he did. I say to him with all respect that no hon. member conscious of his responsibilities as a member of parliament would have made the charges which he made this afternoon.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): How ridiculous can you be?

Mr. Chevrier: My hon. friend says, how ridiculous can I be? Let him listen.

An hon. Member: You deserve it.

Mr. Chevrier: My hon. friend started off by saying that his theme would be very simple, and his theme was this, the control of parliament over public expenditure. That without immediate and full disclosure of unavoidable mistakes which should be accounted for to the house, it can exercise, unless it gets all the facts, no real or effective control over the public purse. Let us see how this business operates. If my hon. friend had gone to the trouble of consulting the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act, which apparently he did not, he would have seen that under the authority of that act there are three members appointed to act together

[Mr. Small.]