

but Mr. Cooper thought it was not in keeping with his dignity to accept what he called a subordinate position in the whole matter. He said: 'If I accept another confere I should confer with him; I should have his approbation, and that I won't do.' And the government receded and went back on their order in council, and in another order in council Mr. Cooper was charged solely with the whole conduct of the bridge construction. By this Bill the government is asking to buy out the company, and is asking parliament to vote the company all the money they subscribed, plus 5 per cent interest on the money engaged in the undertaking, plus a premium of 10 per cent to the shareholders. That means an amount of \$400,000. The government is not obliged to do that. If the government selects another site for the bridge, they will be obliged to commence all anew and build a new foundation. If they want the site already occupied by the piers, let them buy the piers from the company, let them have value for their money, but the money they are giving now is being given for nothing at all. I hope the government will not ask us to swallow that Bill. Has the minister really decided to go on with it?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Yes, it is a necessity if the Quebec bridge is to become a reality. We must have authority to take over the bridge and employ competent persons to prepare plans that can be relied upon.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Will the hon. gentleman refer me to the text of the law that shows he is entitled to do that?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I can only say what I understand to be the law. When the government undertook to guarantee the \$6,000,000 bonds of the Quebec bridge there was a provision, if I correctly remember it, under which they could take over the bridge.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—They could?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—That is all I say. Before they take it over they want to know what it is going to cost, and what kind of bridge can be built, and whether it can be built on that particular site. Unfortunately, the company who were entrusted

with the building of the bridge failed in the undertaking; the plan was a defective one. It is very unfortunate, but it cannot be helped now. The only way now is for the government to assume it, and if the bridge can be built they are to build it.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—By clause 18, the government reserves the right to take over the undertaking.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—That is all I said.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—If the government does not want the piers, where is the necessity of buying out the company? I think the proper course would be, in the first instance, to ascertain where the bridge will be built.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—That can only be ascertained by the most careful inquiry.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Yes, and if the bridge is to be built at the same place, then make your bargain with the company, ask them how much they want for their piers; but the government is not obliged to adopt the same site.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT. They take power under that Bill to select another site.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—They have always that power.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Yes.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Then where is the necessity of spending \$400,000 to buy out the company? It does not advance the bridge an inch. It is doing all for the company.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—It is quite clear the hon. gentleman has not any interest in the company.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY. I have more interest in building the bridge than in buying out the company, and I think the government is losing time in trying to ascertain what amount they will pay to Mr. Parent or the other shareholders. If the time was given to promoting the bridge itself and the interests of Quebec, we would be the gainer altogether; but nothing will be done this year in the way of constructing the bridge. We are losing one year. I ask the hon. gentleman if anything should be done to