

live in St. Catharines. For eleven years the opposition to the building of a bridge across the Niagara river has emanated from that point. To be frank, it came from a late hon. member and minister who resided in that constituency.

That is the statement which was made, and only one inference can be drawn from it; that it referred to the late Hon. J. D. Chaplin. I repeat that many on both sides of the house recall clearly the services which the late Hon. J. D. Chaplin gave to the house and the country. Let me say here most definitely that I do not intend to indulge in any insinuations to-night, but I should like to say that the two men in particular referred to by the Niagara Falls Review, the men who have fought very strongly for the taxpayers of Niagara Falls, are Mayor Hanniwell and Alderman McAninch. I want it distinctly understood that I do not even know these two men, and have never met them. I have heard of them, but I would not know them if they were to meet me on the street. I can say, however, that I believe the citizens of Niagara Falls owe a debt of gratitude to these two men and to the other members of council who have so ably expressed themselves against this bill in its present form.

The hon. member for Welland mentioned the Ethiopian in the woodpile; I have read the passage in Hansard, and I say it points definitely to the late Hon. J. D. Chaplin. Then my hon. friend went on to say that the president and secretary-treasurer of the lower arch bridge company were also residents of St. Catharines. The suggestion is thrown out again that there has been collusion of some kind between these gentlemen and myself. I refute that suggestion. I want to say definitely that I have not discussed with the president, the vice-president or the secretary-treasurer of the lower arch bridge company—

Mr. DAMUDE: Does the hon. member suggest that these gentlemen do not live in St. Catharines?

Mr. LOCKHART: I do not suggest any such thing at all. I said it was stated in this chamber that they lived in St. Catharines, and the inference was that I had been in collusion with these gentlemen. I want to state definitely, that I have never discussed the matter with any of the officers or officials of the lower arch bridge company, and I want that distinctly understood. My stand on this whole question in the House of Commons has been prompted by a great many home owners in the city of Niagara Falls, men struggling to save their homes, from whom I have received a number of letters in connection with Bill No. 15, and their fear of increased tax-

tion. I could take time to read these letters, but I shall give the committee a number of the questions contained in them which I have condensed.

The first question I pick out of one letter is this:

Why did Bill No. 15 as first presented authorize the raising of \$7,500,000 to build a bridge when the bill as introduced in the state assembly of New York only provided for the raising of \$3,000,000?

That is practically the first question I received. Here is the second question:

What explanation has been given that the amount can now be reduced to \$4,000,000, still \$1,000,000 more than asked for in the state of New York?

Another question that was asked by a gentleman who is struggling hard at the present time to save his home in Niagara Falls is:

Why has the meeting arranged for March 26 never been held?

I have referred to that meeting in previous remarks in this chamber. That meeting, which was to consist of all interested parties, was postponed. I have raised that question in committee, and I have raised it in the house, but the meeting has not so far been held. It was to be a meeting of the parks commission, the International Railway Company officials, the mayor and council of Niagara Falls, the Hon. W. L. Houck and the hon. member for Welland, to discuss the problems in connection with this proposal. The date of the meeting was to be three days after the bill was passed in the committee, where I objected to the bill being rushed through, and I asked for a short delay until the matter might be discussed at length in Niagara Falls.

Another question I have been asked is this:

Is it not possible to insert a clause in Bill No. 15, that would protect the taxpayers of Niagara Falls against loss of taxation if five acres of river front is to be taken over?

It is pointed out that it is the most valuable river front property along the border. I can read the letter if that is desired, but I think the hon. member for Welland will admit that it is an extremely valuable piece of property. Here is another question I have been asked:

Would I urge that a protective clause be inserted in Bill No. 15?

I think it has been suggested in council at Niagara Falls and in the discussions here that some protection should be given, and I have already made myself clear on that point. Another question I was asked was this:

Could I ascertain if the report was correct that some of the provisional directors named in Bill No. 15 were related to members of the provincial government?