

clined to do some protection work in the province of Quebec, which we were asked to do. If we were to admit our liability to do this work, there would be no end to the work we would be called on to assume. In Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta the population is growing rapidly. Towns, cities and villages are springing up along the banks of these navigable rivers, and there will necessarily be a considerable amount of work required in the near future to protect those communities from the erosions of their banks by rivers. I am not prepared to hold out any inducement that this work will be done by the federal government, much as I sympathize with the individuals who are suffering in the way my hon. friend describes. My hon. friend says that this is a navigable water. That does not throw the responsibility on the federal government. All the federal government has to do with it, is the control of navigation, and this has nothing to do with the control. The federal government has to do with the improvement of navigation, but this is in no way connected with navigation at all. The soil of the lake is either owned by the provincial government or by the riparian owners, and the federal government has no more to do with the protection of the banks from erosion by navigable rivers than with the building of highways. The work is purely of a local character.

Mr. SPROULE: Why, then, do we spend so much year after year down the St. Lawrence to prevent landslides into the river?

Mr. PUGSLEY: At what place?

Mr. SPROULE: I could not say from memory.

Mr. PUGSLEY: If that was done, it was not done under my administration. It has been done in some places before my time, in the eastern provinces as well as in Ontario and the west, but I have felt that we were going from precedent to precedent; and if we recognized the obligation, our responsibility would grow to a very large amount, and instead of having money for improving harbours and navigation, and building wharfs, we would be forced to spend a great deal on local protection works of this character. It seems to me that this is a work rather for the municipalities themselves and the provincial governments. My hon. friend says that the highway is likely to be washed away. In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the highways are looked after by the provincial governments. There is a local tax, but the provincial government attends to the building and repairing of highways, exacting a local tax from the people to assist in this work. If this work be needed for a protection of a highway, the provincial government might very well join with the municipality

in paying for it. I do not wish to be considered as throwing the liability on the provincial government, but it is a fair matter for consideration whether they should not join the municipal authorities in doing this work. I do not know whether my hon. friend's voice would be potent in the legislative halls of Ontario or not, but it would be well worth his while to suggest the matter for the consideration of the provincial authorities. In British Columbia, the provincial government is doing a good deal of work in preventing the banks of navigable rivers from being washed away, just as in the case referred to. For these reasons, I regret I cannot give the promise my hon. friend asks.

Mr. HENDERSON: I regret very much the hon. gentleman's decision. He thinks that we should look to the provincial government, but the provincial government may say that they have nothing to do with Lake Ontario and that they are not responsible for the damages done by that lake.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Neither are we.

Mr. HENDERSON: I disagree with the hon. gentleman. Lake Ontario is a navigable water under the control of this government. And I notice there is a Bill on the Order Paper which would practically prohibit either the Ontario legislature or the municipality in question from constructing these piers without the consent of this government, and this government might not give that consent. This government is assuming control anyway by this Bill which will prohibit the county of Holton from extending a pier out into the lake or building a groyne to prevent those erosions.

Mr. PUGSLEY: They need have no fear on that score. They will get permission very readily.

Mr. HENDERSON: That very fact is an evidence that this government has assumed the responsibility. I think that there is an admission in that statement, that the government has something to do with the whole matter. But let us go to the village of Burlington alone and leave the other. Surely, the hon. minister does not intend to throw off responsibility for the care of harbours, and the erosions at Burlington have everything to do with the harbour. At any rate, they take place so close to the harbour that they interfere with the harbour at that village, and, therefore, I do not think the minister can escape responsibility. He certainly should instruct his engineers to give him a special report on the subject and see whether he would not regard this damage at Burlington as an interference with the harbour. True, the government has never spent any money on Burlington harbour. The wharfs