

Mr. RYERSON: In view of that statement, it would appear that the consumers of electric power would be taxed the difference.

Mr. SIFTON: Not necessarily; not necessarily. The Railway Commission could take this position—they could say “We will take the bases upon which we will charge power as the cost of that power after having deducted any excess cost due to larger dams, which are made necessary by navigation, but would not be necessary on account of the power.” That is a matter of high policy which Parliament will decide, and is not for us. Under the charter, there is no compulsion whatsoever that any additional cost would be charged to the power users.

Hon. Mr. DUNNING: Your company is entirely a private company, is it not?

Mr. SIFTON: Entirely.

Hon. Mr. DUNNING: And the National Hydro is also a private company, is it not?

Mr. SIFTON: So far as I understand; I do not know anything about their company except from the public reports.

Hon. Mr. DUNNING: The rates to be charged for power under your charter are controlled by the Railway Commission?

Mr. SIFTON: Absolutely; we cannot sell one horsepower to anybody until after we have an order from the Railway Commission, authorizing it, and authorizing the price.

Hon. Mr. DUNNING: Does such control exist with respect to the National Hydro?

Mr. SIFTON: I have read through the lease, and I understand the only way such control can be instituted is by a condition of the lease, and I cannot find that in their lease; I know of no such control.

Hon. Mr. DUNNING: Why is it regarded as an unrighteous thing, in regard to the principles of public ownership, for you to sell power to the Ontario Hydro Commission, and a perfectly righteous thing for the National Hydro to do the same thing?

Mr. SIFTON: I am afraid I cannot give political evidence in front of this committee.

Hon. Mr. DUNNING: I am trying to get at the public ownership aspect of the thing.

Mr. SIFTON: I can see no reason—

Mr. HANSON: That is very pretty team play.

Mr. SIFTON: In my opinion, the Hydro Electric organization in the province of Ontario, under this canal charter, and under the regulations of the Railway Commission, is in a very sound permanent position, more so than they could be under any arrangement with any private company, not so controlled, other than ourselves.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions to ask of Mr. Sifton?

Mr. GARDINER: Statements have been made in support of this Bill that by building this canal, the cost of shipping wheat from the head of the lakes to Montreal will be greatly reduced. In view of the recent statement you have made, will you explain that matter?

Mr. SIFTON: Well, the company took care to make that matter a matter of record. They sent a letter to all the members of the House, and they gave their argument in regard to it. We can call technical evidence, Mr. Gardiner, in support of that statement of the company. I would be pleased to read the statement into the record as an answer. That is the company's answer. Our view in regard to it is this:—