

Of course, if the Government, in view of the possibility of its deciding later to build a navigation canal takes from us, as it has been suggested when approving our plans, an undertaking that, should the Government decide on canalization on the southern side, we will supply the canal and the locks free of charge, then this would give the Government a financial interest in choosing the southern route, should canalization be decided on, but that is all.

It seems therefore that any recommendation of the sort or other suggestion that nothing at all be done on the St. Lawrence until the canalization scheme is decided on should not be entertained. It would delay indefinitely all power projects on the St. Lawrence. It would delay a project which is wanted by Quebec and needed in the interest of this part of the country, and there is no reason for such delay. The proper attitude is to grant the approval of the plans provided present navigation is taken care of and to take an undertaking from the grantee that, should canalization be decided on on the southern shore, the grantee will do this part of the work.

The other question is that of the reference to the courts.

Let me first say that any experience before the Privy Council in matters of this sort, an experience that can be easily checked by any study of the law reports, will show that a definite settlement of these questions is very far away. The final judgment of the Privy Council on this reference cannot very well be delivered until at least one year from now. It is practically sure that the Privy Council will refuse to answer many of the questions as being too general. It has done so before. It will guard itself very cautiously, because it never does commit itself.

We have been litigating since thirty years nearly on a much simpler question: the question of succession duties as between various provinces and we have had six or seven judgments of the Privy Council. The question is not yet elucidated.

The question respecting companies as between the Dominion and the Provinces began over twelve years ago and there is this year a case from Manitoba where the question is still being disputed.

It will be a very long time before the whole thing is satisfactorily settled and it will be at least a year before even the first Privy Council judgment is obtained.

Is all development in every navigable river to be arrested during that time?

It seems to me that the proper solution, as a general question of policy, is for this Government to let the Provincial developments go as heretofore, except when they are in conflict with any navigation plan of the Government. The Government has always in that case refused to approve the proposed plans, but if the proposed plan that the province has approved of is not in conflict with any navigation plan of the Dominion, or can be reconciled with it, then it seems the proposed development should be approved of. If the Dominion wins to any extent whatever, later on it is clear that the matter will have to be adjusted; thus, to take an extreme case: If it was held that both as to jurisdiction and as to revenue, this Beauharnois development is exclusively federal, the jurisdiction of the province over it for the future would end and the Dominion, for the future, would have exclusive jurisdiction, the rentals stipulated payable to the province would stop and the rentals in the future would be payable to the Dominion, according to that very simple principle that if I buy or lease a piece of property from