

Private Bills

Mr. Rouleau: He should know that in 1961 the House of Commons passed a similar bill which contained almost the same sections as the one which is being studied today. It is the bill concerning the corporation of the Three Rivers bridge; the said corporation was authorized in the same way by parliament to build a bridge over the St. Lawrence river. It is a private company.

Mr. Caouette: It has not yet been built.

Mr. Rouleau: As far as the St. Lawrence river is concerned, under the Navigable Waters Protection Act, an act of parliament is needed to allow a corporation to build a bridge over the St. Lawrence river, whether the waterway is to be crossed completely or in part.

In this case, it is intended to build a bridge not longer than 500 feet, so that the people concerned may move about on an island which they own. It is nothing more than that.

I am asked today to give the names of the members of that company. I am glad to do so: the president is Mr. Conrad Bock, the director is Mr. Robert Desy, notary, of Montreal and the secretary-treasurer is Miss Denise Cournoyer, also of Montreal.

Mr. Caouette: These are the temporary directors?

Mr. Rouleau: They are the actual directors of the company. The one who is most interested in that company is the president, Mr. Conrad Bock.

Mr. Gregoire: Are there permanent directors in the company?

Mr. Rouleau: As far as I know, there are no other directors than those I just mentioned to the house.

Mr. Gregoire: Are those three the only shareholders?

Mr. Rouleau: To my knowledge, the three of them are the only shareholders in the company. There are no others.

Mr. Gregoire: By virtue of what were they incorporated?

Mr. Rouleau: By virtue of an act of the province of Quebec.

Mr. Gregoire: The first or the second part?

Mr. Rouleau: If the hon. member for La-pointe had listened to me when I introduced the bill last week, he would know that I gave all those details. I explained at that time why it was impossible to build such a bridge without going through this procedure.

There is nothing to make such a fuss about. The purpose of the bill is to authorize a company to build, over a part of the St. Lawrence river, a bridge of only 500 feet,

[Mr. Caouette.]

to enable the people concerned to proceed with the development of an island near Montreal.

I am convinced that the building of this bridge would help stem unemployment in Montreal and ensure an excellent development in the limits of the city.

In the circumstances, I ask my hon. friend from Villeneuve to be kind enough to withdraw his amendment.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the hon. member whether this bridge will be a toll bridge?

Mr. Rouleau: When the company first came before the Senate, its intention was to build a toll bridge. But following the objections that were raised in the committee of the other place, the bill was amended and the company was not authorized to build a toll bridge there.

Mr. Caouette: Could the hon. member for Dollard tell the house whether that company is presently operating on the island of Montreal or outside the city? Is the company engaged in some works or in the building of homes?

Mr. Rouleau: This island measures about 2,000 acres, 1,737 of which can be used. Out of those 1,737 acres, 1,480 are owned by the company. Moreover, the company has options on the other lands.

So far, the company has applied for the loans required for the construction of that bridge. Therefore the company is operating. Does that answer your question?

Mr. Caouette: Did the hon. member for Dollard inquire from the federal authorities in order to find out whether the federal government would not take the responsibility of building such a bridge to those two islands?

Mr. Rouleau: Last week, the hon. members for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm (Mr. Pigeon), I think, inquired about the merits of a private enterprise erecting a bridge over a stream like the one in question.

Generally speaking, I think the construction of bridges rests with both provincial and federal governments.

The proposed structure will be only 500 feet long and will make possible a private development. In my opinion, it should not be expected that either the federal government or the province will build a bridge for the sake of private individuals. I feel that if the company wishes to develop an island it owns, it should also make the necessary expenditures to get to that island.

Mr. Speaker, if the bill is given second reading, our hon. friends will have every