

St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act

bridge—which of course is an international bridge—would have to be authorized by parliament, and preferably at this current session, as work should be commenced during the present construction season. The proposal which is embodied in the resolution is to amend the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act to provide that the authority would share in the cost of construction and in the building of either the low level highway and railway Pollys Gut bridge, or the south channel high level highway bridge, in the event that some unforeseen development makes it necessary to return to the idea of the bridge over Pollys Gut.

Mr. Chairman, I do not think that anybody who is familiar with the geography of this particular part of the river and the surrounding country would have any doubt whatever that the high level bridge for highway traffic over the south channel south of Cornwall island has many obvious advantages, apart from the fact that it means a lesser cost to provide these facilities than that of those which were contemplated at Pollys Gut. I have no hesitation in urging the committee to adopt the resolution to the end that, as soon as possible, we can introduce the requisite legislation based on the resolution. In that connection I should like to tell hon. members that the bill itself will contain nothing more than the strict terms of the resolution which is now before the committee.

Mr. Nesbitt: In view of the minister's statement, Mr. Chairman, there are just a few brief questions I should like to ask him. The first one is this. It is indicated in the memorandum to which the minister was referring a few minutes ago that in future there will be a high level bridge—I presume it will be a highway bridge only—over the north channel. Is that contemplated in this resolution?

Mr. Marler: I do not think I mentioned that, Mr. Chairman. I notice that the newspapers have mentioned the possibility of a bridge over the north channel. I did not remember that I had mentioned it. I will say this, however. I think it is a perfectly logical development, although when it will be undertaken is an entirely different matter. I think it is a logical development for one to expect to take place in due time.

Mr. Nesbitt: The only reason I asked the question is this. It is my understanding that in the north channel there is not likely to be any shipping of any kind. I was wondering just what was the purpose of building a high level bridge over there.

Mr. Marler: I should not like to dismiss, quite as simply as that, the possibility that there would be no navigation in the north

[Mr. Marler.]

channel. If my hon. friend will look at the plan of the seaway he will see that the channel for navigation is to be dredged in the south channel, that is in the waters to the south of Cornwall island, and will lead directly to the Grass river lock which is being built by the United States seaway corporation. It may well happen at some later date that Canada will decide to construct locks on its own side of the international boundary line and in that event the channel to the north of Cornwall island, the so-called north channel, would have to be used in order to provide access to the lock which I think would be located just about—I do not know if my hon. friend is familiar with the work, but at the point where there is to be what is called a structure in the dam. So ultimately if there were duplicate facilities provided for shipping it would necessitate a high level bridge over the north channel, if one is to be built.

Mr. Nesbitt: I take it from the minister's comments that there is no additional high level bridge contemplated over the north channel in the immediate future. I believe the present bridge, which is called the Roosevelt bridge, over the north channel will be used in the meanwhile.

Mr. Marler: Yes, that is correct.

Mr. Nesbitt: There are only one or two other questions I should like to ask. In the last few days there has been considerable criticism in the press from Mr. Robert Moses, chairman of the New York power authority, claiming that if this bridge is constructed it will result in a delay of one year in the construction of the seaway. I have a number of press clippings in front of me to that effect, but I have not been able to find in any of them any reasons given by Mr. Moses for this suggested delay of a year. Nevertheless, I ask the question because a person with Mr. Moses' knowledge of the subject must know what he is talking about, and he is chairman of an important New York state authority. I was wondering if the minister would care to comment on that?

Mr. Marler: I should like to dispose of two points. With regard to the north channel bridge, I think the hon. gentleman will find, if he rereads the amendments which were adopted earlier this year, that they contain the necessary authority for the St. Lawrence seaway authority to build the north channel bridge if it were considered desirable that it should do so.

The second point is that I know Mr. Moses has said the building of the bridge in this new location, that is over the south channel as opposed to Pollys Gut, would have the