

# Charges Confirmed By Tory Explanation, Is Liberal Assertion

**House Leader Sinclair Is  
Caustic and Dr. Mc-  
Quibban Assails Off-  
Peak Power Sales as  
Described to Legisla-  
ture by Hon. John  
Robert Cooke**

**STOP THEM NOW,  
HE CHALLENGES**

**Government Spokesman  
Says if Any Ontario  
Industrialist Wants  
Power at Price Off-  
Peak Current Is Sold to  
U.S. He Can Have It**

Hon. John Robert Cooke, Acting Chairman of the Ontario Hydro Power Commission, stated yesterday that the Commission had decided on the rehabilitation of the Dominion Power and Transmission Company's system in a way that would allow utilization of most of the off-peak power now exported to the United States.

The work, he said, would take a matter of two or three years to complete. He explained that the Dominion system is now developing and distributing 61,000 horsepower. But the Commission had decided that it was better adapted to a "peak-load" proposition. By rehabilitating the Dominion system and co-ordinating it with the "off-peak" power now exported, the system could distribute 200,000 horsepower, an increase of about 140,000 horsepower, and at the same time save for Ontario consumers off-peak power now exported.

Stirring defense by Hon. John Robert Cooke, Acting Hydro Commission Chairman, of Ontario's sale of off-peak power to the United States, of its undertaking in connection with the Quebec power contracts, and of the "general healthy condition" in which the Beck-built enterprise finds itself today, coupled with an equally stubborn charge by Liberal Leader Sinclair that Mr. Cooke had not only failed to "annihilate" (as predicted for him) the McQuibban charges of last week, but had, on the other hand, actually confirmed them, featured yesterday's Legislature debate on the voting of Hydro items in the supplementary estimates.

In between the Hydro head and the Opposition chief came more McQuibban-made medicine—a stiff swallow, too, for the Government benches—in that it contained further allegations

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that "all the mystery about Hydro" was rocking the Conservative Party to its foundations, and that the hustings on the occasion of the next Provincial election was certain to tell it so, if it did not believe it now.

#### Long Discussion.

Two hours and a half was occupied by the House yesterday afternoon in writing finis to this Hydro argument—an argument which started with Dr. McQuibban's fireworks of last week, was carried on another step by Mr. Cooke, in the wind-up of the Budget debate, and had numerous private members as well as Cabinet Ministers warmly engaged from beginning to end. The Beauharnois contract was not mentioned directly yesterday, either by Mr. Cooke, who, unofficially, was slated to discuss it, or by Premier George S. Henry, who just before the final curtain waded into the controversy with a couple of hefty punches for the Opposition.

When the Hydro estimates were reached during the voting of supplementary estimates Hon. Mr. Cooke rose to refute what he claimed were erroneous statements being made in certain quarters regarding the export of power to the United States and the import of power from Quebec.

A revenue of \$1,100,000 annually was received from the export of off-peak power to the United States, he said, and applied to reduce the price of power charged consumers in the Niagara district. This off-peak power, he said, could not be used by Ontario consumers. "If any one has the courage to move, and if this Legislature passes, a resolution which would deny the users in the Niagara district this revenue for off-peak power, there are no contracts made by this Commission which could not be cancelled in twenty-four hours," he declared. Most of this off-peak power, he continued, was exported at night, when there was no demand for it here. With regard to other than off-peak power exported, he explained that that was under existing contracts assumed by the Hydro when it took over other privately owned plants.

#### Can Use It in Short Time Hence.

When the Hydro system is rehabilitated, which would take a matter of two or three years, it would be able to use this off-peak power in Ontario and sell it at \$13 a horsepower.

Hon. H. C. Nixon—Have any Ontario manufacturers now the privilege of accepting or refusing this off-peak power at the same terms on which it is exported?

Mr. Cooke—If you name me a manufacturer in Ontario who is willing to accept that off-peak power at the price at which we are exporting it, he can have it.

Regarding the contracts by the Commission to purchase Quebec power, Mr. Cooke explained that in 1923 a dearth of power was foreseen for users in the Niagara district, which had 72 per cent. of the population and 85 per cent. of the manufacturers of the whole Province.

#### Names Rental Figure.

Referring to the contract made by the Commission with the International Power and Paper Company at Pagan Falls, he mentioned that the company was paying the Commission \$30,000 a year rental for a transmission line with a total load of 30,000 horsepower. When a second line is built it would pay a total rental of \$90,000 a year. Deducting this rental, he said, the company laid down power at the Ontario boundary at a

net price of \$9.55 per horsepower.

After a discussion of the terms of the contracts and the conditions under which they had been made, Mr. Cooke declared that "Quebec power is being delivered cheaper to this city than power generated at Niagara." These contracts had also allowed the Commission to sell power 35 to 40 per cent. cheaper in the Eastern Ontario district than ever before.

He felt that it would have been better if, in days gone by, these circumstances had been given wider publicity through the press. "It would have been better if we had called in the press and put the situation before them," he remarked. In spite of the depression, he prophesied that the new uses to which electricity is being put would keep up the increasing demand for power.

#### Says Association Consulted.

Revealing the close co-operation between the Commission and the municipalities, Mr. Cooke declared that the Ontario Hydro Municipal Association was consulted on every question of major importance. He illustrated this by stating that, although the headquarters of the Commission had been housed in thirteen buildings, no action had been taken toward the construction of a new building without consulting the association. "Only today," he said, "I received the unanimous recommendation of the executive of the association that the new building should be built."

Mr. Nixon—Did not the Legislature make a vote for the new building?

Mr. Cooke—Yes, \$1,500,000, but the Commission would not proceed with it without the consent of the municipal association.

#### Export to U.S.

Dr. McQuibban, opening his address, remarked that 125,000 horsepower was exported by the Commission. He quoted authorities of United States power bodies and engineers to the effect that if this power were cut off it would be a calamity to manufacturers in New York. One American writer had said that if this power were stopped going across the border New York manufacturers would be attracted to Ontario. The Commission, he said, generated power at Niagara

Falls and exported at a small rate, and at the same time imported power at a "nice" rate.

"Cancel the contracts for this export of power," he challenged, "and give us the power generated at Niagara."

Hon. Dr. Monteith—It's off-peak power.

Premier Henry said that the original contracts of the Ontario Power Company assumed by Hydro were for 100 years.

If these contracts for the export of power were cancelled, Dr. McQuibban asserted, American industries would come over to Ontario. The Liberal Whip also criticized certain experts of the Commission for services rendered to Quebec power interests working side by side with the engineers of private power interests.

Dr. McQuibban deplored what he termed the efforts of Mr. Cooke and the Hydro Commission to hide behind the record and name of Sir Adam Beck, and to shield themselves and their bargainings with Quebec power interests behind a statement that Sir Adam once negotiated for the purchase of Quebec power when, as he put it, "Sir Adam no longer can speak for himself in this regard."

The House knew full well, and so did the Hydro Commission, submitted the Northeast Wellington member, that had Sir Adam been alive today these Beauharnois and Maclaren contracts never would have been entered into.

#### Faith Becoming Shattered.

Mr. Cooke had referred to him, said Dr. McQuibban, as a man who knew about as much about the Hydro question as "a babe on the street." "Well, just let me tell the honorable member," said Dr. McQuibban, "that the childlike faith of the people of this Province in the Hydro enterprise is becoming shattered."

Dr. McQuibban said he had "rolled