

Supply—Transport

canal near Iroquois on the St. Lawrence. This, admittedly, will give rise to problems as to the handling and control of traffic, but we believe it possible to provide for the satisfactory movement of traffic. So far as canal construction is concerned, departmental expenditures will be reduced by over \$1 million because of the completion of certain projects, among which are included the rehabilitation of the St. Peters canal, the providing for two-way navigation near Iroquois, to which I have just referred, and certain larger items on the Welland, Sault and Trent canals.

Turning to marine matters, we have a new program for aids to navigation on the Mackenzie river in order to develop it further as an important water route to the western Arctic. We propose also to carry out some important rehabilitation work at our marine agency at Halifax, and we have plans in hand for the construction of a new marine agency and depot at Saint John, New Brunswick.

Our work in connection with marine supply and patrol in the Arctic increases each year. My officials played an important part in the development of plans for resupply of defence installations in the western Arctic and are at present engaged in studies in relation to the eastern Arctic. We continue to provide and co-ordinate the movement of government sea supply to the eastern Arctic and to send ships north for this purpose. We have been requested to provide a departmental vessel to assist in the special supply and convoy work next summer in connection with the D.E.W. line in this area. These developments account largely for the increase of \$325,000 in the vote for steamers' operations.

We have also had a substantial increase in requests for special icebreaking assistance in the St. Lawrence river and gulf and in adjacent maritime areas, including Newfoundland. We have done our best to meet these widely varying requirements, although we are not equipped with enough icebreakers to be able to meet all requests. We have under construction a new medium-sized icebreaker for use in the river St. Lawrence and we expect to start the construction this spring of a similar vessel which will probably be based in Newfoundland and will serve as a marine agency supply vessel there.

We have also completed plans for a ship-building program that will give us, over the next four years, a more modern and up-to-date fleet of icebreakers and marine agency supply vessels. For a number of years we have been attempting to carry out an extensive program of icebreaking, northern supply work, provision and supply of aids to

navigation, including lighthouses and buoys, and marine agency work generally, and we have been handicapped in our work by not having enough ships suitable for working in ice and by the fact that a number of our agency vessels are old and obsolete and in many cases were originally built for other purposes.

Because of the important responsibilities in respect of shipping that rests upon it, I believe that the department is justified in having a proper and up-to-date fleet. We plan to replace from 12 to 15 of our oldest and most unsatisfactory departmental vessels, and to add certain new vessels primarily for icebreaking purposes. We shall complete this year smaller marine agency vessels for the Victoria and Quebec agencies, a small icebreaker for work in the St. Lawrence river to replace the *Lady Grey*, and a new lightship for the Sambro station. In addition, we expect to start construction on a new supply vessel for the great lakes, a new, large icebreaker for northern work, and a vessel for St. John's, Newfoundland, that will be able to combine icebreaking and agency supply work. The last mentioned vessel is the one I referred to a little earlier in my remarks. Plans for the other replacements, which will be commenced in subsequent years, are at present under preparation.

I should add that where feasible all new vessels will be strengthened for work in ice and will, if large enough, be provided with helicopter decks that can be used as bases for helicopter operations in the event of emergency. It has now been clearly demonstrated by our experience in helicopter use on our Arctic supply missions, and by our experience this winter in keeping a helicopter on the *d'Iberville*, that our icebreakers should have a helicopter permanently stationed on them, as this makes possible a much more efficient and economic work program.

As part of a four year program we are calling tenders this year for a new dredging contract to continue the gradual improvement of the navigation channel in the St. Lawrence river from Montreal to below Quebec, by widening and straightening the channel. As a start, a sum of \$3,282,000 is provided for the work we hope to carry out in 1956-57.

In the matter of steamship inspection, we have been actively considering the technical regulations applicable to fishing boats, and after lengthy consultations with the industry have developed regulations for fishing craft under 80 feet in length and are at present engaged in consultations with the industry regarding fishing craft over 80 feet in length. Out steamship inspection expenditures will not vary materially, although we are estimating a slight reduction.