

*Chignecto Canal*

cent. Restitution was not made to the company that expended their money and the project was abandoned.

In 1932 another survey was made by Arthur Surveyer, D. W. Robb and John F. Sowards. They reported that the building of the canal was feasible. Their proposed canals ranged from sixteen to twenty-five feet in depth, to cost from \$20 million to \$55,484,000. The people interested in this project and who made a study of it believed the estimated cost was greatly swollen and much more than actually required to build it. It was considered a commercial undertaking that had to pay its way; adverse reports were made and the canal was never proceeded with.

No canal in Canada has ever paid its way. On May 20, 1947, I made a speech in which I outlined the amounts expended on canals in central Canada. It is found at page 3271 of *Hansard*, and reads as follows:

Central Canada has had \$243,752,399.78 expended on canals, and there have been accumulated deficits of \$114,130,209.81, or a total of \$357,882,609.59.

Although the Chignecto canal was put fourth on the list of canal projects that should be undertaken shortly after confederation, it was not undertaken and has never been proceeded with to this day. At the present time there is a committee actively engaged in studying this project. Some of the daily newspapers such as the *Saint John Telegraph-Journal* and the *Moncton Times* have been giving a lot of publicity to the project. Businessmen and the heads of municipalities as well as boards of trade have been advocating the construction of this canal. Other newspapers in Nova Scotia have given splendid support to this undertaking. I am referring specially to the *Halifax Herald* and the *Amherst Daily News*.

Private individuals, Mr. Speaker, have put their hands into their own pockets and have taken up subscriptions. They have appointed a committee and a secretary and are gathering information. Shortly, they expect to make a report on the project and make application to the federal government to have construction undertaken at once. No sum has been placed in the estimates for it; it is not referred to in the speech from the throne and no policy has been announced by the government, so far as we in the maritime provinces know. To the people of Nova Scotia the Ottawa government is a complete blank in dealing with this undertaking that has been promised to us ever since the days of confederation.

This canal is necessary as a commercial undertaking. It is very desirable as a defence undertaking. There are great possibilities for a power development there and

[Mr. Black (Cumberland).]

it is a public work that should be constructed without delay in the interests of Nova Scotia, which has contributed so much to confederation. It will be in the interests of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island as well as in the interests of Newfoundland. A great deal of the traffic of all these provinces would go through the canal. Year after year the project has been put off. I might say, Mr. Speaker, that hope deferred has made the heart grow sick, so far as many people in that part of Canada are concerned.

I have not the exact sum, but I believe approximately \$65 million was expended on the Hudson Bay Railway Company. On my desk I have a report of the harbours board, and there has been expended the enormous sum of \$12,902,000 on harbour facilities at the port of Churchill. If that railway is warranted, it should be made to transport cheap feed grain to the maritime provinces through the Northumberland strait and through this canal.

I do not know that there is much more I need to say at this time, but there is much that could be said. When the St. Lawrence ship canal is mentioned in this house or amongst the private members, I have never heard a man say he is opposed to the building of that canal so long as there is a quid pro quo for the other parts of Canada. The members of this house, and the government, are not averse to spending \$500 million in order to build the St. Lawrence canal; but Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick are given the brush-off. Coal, apples, farm products, lumber and iron ore could be shipped through this canal. Then there are the enormous developments in Labrador and Quebec to be considered. There are hundreds of millions of tons of iron ore lying unmined there that are in need of a market. This iron ore could be refined in the maritime provinces and in the New England states where there are tremendous markets for such product. By the use of the Chignecto canal there would be a saving of from two hundred to four hundred miles in transporting the products. Also, as I said a few minutes ago, it would be a necessary undertaking from the point of view of national defence if there should be another war. It would enable ships to go through the Chignecto canal and not have to pass through the dangerous and perilous waters, from the standpoint of navigation and from the standpoint of submarines and other naval menaces, along the Atlantic coast.

I am bringing this matter to the attention of the members of this house and to the attention of the government as a grievance that we have had since the days of confederation. The people in central Canada do not