

according to the wish of the United States, namely 27 to 30 feet in depth down the Richelieu river, that would be a tremendous work.

The point I wish to make is that from their point of view a canal that will not permit ships of ocean draught to pass from the St. Lawrence river to the Hudson river would be of little worth. That is their proposition, and it has been demonstrated that a twelve foot canal is not of much value, since it only carried 351,000 tons of freight in 1935. According to the submission of the Montreal chambre de commerce the traffic on our own Chambly canal ranged from 99,998 tons in 1930 to 44,219 tons in 1935.

I assure the minister that if any reasonable argument in support of the expenditure of so many millions of dollars as \$8,000,000 could be brought forward, showing that this would be of any practical benefit to Canadian commerce, I would not oppose the expenditure. So far, however, I am not aware of anything that has been presented either before the International Joint Commission or this house that would warrant me in supporting any expenditure of that sum on this river. There are concrete roadways running beside the river; I motored over some, though not all, of them. I found a road down one side of the river from Chambly to near St. Johns, where I crossed on the other side. It is a fine old historic country which I would be pleased to assist in any way possible; but all the commodities that are produced in the immediate vicinity of the canal can go by truck to Montreal and elsewhere, and would be transported in that manner instead of down the canal. During my survey I learned that the only traffic on the canal was pulp from Three Rivers, coming south, and perhaps a little oil moving in the opposite direction; but according to statistics the traffic carried amounted to very little, not nearly enough to warrant any such expenditure of money.

I hope the minister will not take it that I am opposing him personally. He is one minister I would be very happy to support. I think a good deal of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cardin); I should like to support his proposals, and the very fact that yesterday he got through so many of his items without opposition is proof that we on this side think a good deal of him. But it will take more than I have heard as yet to get me to support this expenditure.

The finest thing the minister said yesterday, to my mind, was his statement that this is a revote. So long as he brings in this amount as a revote each year, I will not have

[Mr. MacNicol.]

a word to say. Next year, the year after, and the year after that, if he brings in a long list of items including an item for the Chambly canal, and states that that item is a revote, I will not say a word about the canal. But I will have to oppose this item until I am shown actual trade available or in prospect very much greater than is the case to-day. I cannot see it in prospect now. I have spoken to those in Montreal and Three Rivers who should know the facts, and I have learned that practically all the traffic offering is what comes to and from Three Rivers. The Montreal traffic would not go that way. If the minister will just continue this as a revote all the items for Quebec will go through safely.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

Mr. LENNARD: No, it is not carried. I not only wish to voice my own objection to this particular item of half a million dollars for the Richelieu river improvements, but also to present the very strenuous objection of the Hamilton chamber of commerce. On December 9, 1936, the following resolution was sent by the Hamilton chamber of commerce to Mr. Lawrence J. Burpee, secretary of the International Joint Commission:

"Resolved, that in the light of information before us at this time that this board express its strong opposition to the proposals placed before the International Joint Commission during the meetings from the 19th to the 27th of November."

This attitude is adopted not only because it is not considered wise or desirable, under present financial conditions, to support any plan of this nature which would mean the ultimate expenditure of the sum of two hundred million dollars as outlined in the proposal, but taking into consideration as well the large annual deficit of our government railway, the substantial cost of the maintenance and operation of our present canal system and the almost lack of advantage to Canada in the building of this canal.

Further, our understanding is that there is a 160 lift from the St. Lawrence river to lake Champlain, all of which is Canadian territory, and as it is proposed that this canal would be toll free the major portion of the cost of construction, maintenance and operation would fall on Canada.

I should like to say a further word with regard to these estimates generally. How are we to know how many of these amounts included in item 342 are revotes? This particular item was attacked last evening, and it happens to be a revote. Can the minister say how many of the others are revotes?

Mr. CARDIN: The next item, "Rimouski—harbour improvements, \$475,000" is largely a revote. Practically half of this amount is a revote. The second following item, "Riviere