

*The Budget—Mr. Balcom*

I wish to speak now of one particular phase of federal responsibility in this field, namely that which concerns the port of Halifax. Since the administration of the port of Halifax was taken over in 1935 by the national harbours board, commendable progress has been made. Facilities have been improved by the replacement of structures in use in the 'thirties'; new sheds have been built on piers 26 and 9B which have added 20 per cent to the effective shed area, and a modern large pier to replace the old pier 3 has been constructed. The improvement in facilities has permitted the handling of a larger volume of general cargo. Grain handling facilities have also been increased, with the doubling of the elevator storage space.

Further, there are substantial additions now under way. Shed 27 and the new pier A-1 with its two additional sheds will go a long way toward meeting our current needs. This new pier and its sheds will cost well over \$5 million. But in a growing country like Canada we must not think only in terms of this year's needs; we must plan for five years from now, yes, for 25 years in the future, as the Gordon commission was asked to do.

Two events in the present shipping season which, as hon. members know, are the winter months in Halifax, have directed attention to our port facilities. I refer to the strike on the Canadian Pacific Railway and to the recent tie-up of United States Atlantic ports. Both brought increased business to Halifax at the height of its busy season and created some problems. Although the facilities were taxed by this additional business, the experience of those affected directly proved both the suitability of the port for such traffic and the quality of the service that could be rendered.

Nevertheless, the evidence pointed to the need for a close look at the situation. In order to have first-hand knowledge I asked responsible people in the shipping industry, both business and labour, for their views on desirable improvements.

The answers I received, although not unanimous as to details, expressed the need for the addition of facilities such as piers, sheds, grain berths and a heavy crane capable of lifting 200 tons. It is not my purpose to go into the details here. I shall pass them on to the national harbours board management, where I know they will receive proper consideration, but I do want to deal with some general considerations which involve long-range policy.

It takes more than physical facilities in the shape of piers, sheds and machinery for an efficient port. The most effective use

of these facilities requires not only good organization within the port authority but co-operation and good relations with the shipping companies and the men who work on the waterfront, the stevedores and the freight handlers. The high reputation of Halifax could not be attained if any one of these fell short in their responsibilities. The signal success that has been achieved must be judged in the light of the particular difficulties faced by all agencies concerned.

The short season is perhaps the fundamental problem. A second factor is that Halifax is a port of call for many ships and not a terminal port, which results in many small cargoes instead of fewer larger ones. This means that the services of many different shipping companies, the railway, the stevedores, the freight handlers and the trucking firms must all be co-ordinated. To make the best use of the physical facilities, superior organization and the good will of all parties are required.

Turning again to the long-range planning the situation demands, I suggest that first the federal departments and agencies involved should review their requirements with the object of defining an integrated plan of development. To have an integrated plan I would say it is about time the Canadian National Railways did something to improve their facilities in Nova Scotia, not just at Moncton, Truro and outside stations but in Halifax itself. A particularly bad spot at this time is Deep Water, where since the war the new pier 3, costing well over \$3 million, was built through the efforts of the national harbours board, whereas the railway entrance to pier 2 and pier 3 has received little if any attention and is very inadequate. From pier 9 to Deep Water terminals there is only one rail line in and one rail line out. When they are servicing the local freight shed piers 2 and 3 have to wait, and I am informed that on occasion it takes 24 hours to get a car placed in this area.

We would recommend that it is high time the local freight shed was moved from its present location and the land and tracks used to service piers 2 and 3 for import and export cargo. A suggestion has been made that some exchange of properties between the harbours board and the Royal Canadian Navy would provide easier rail access for commercial shipping. If such is desirable, the Canadian National Railways should sit down with the other two departments to determine the best course of action.

If we are to proceed with plans that will facilitate the development of the industrial mile on the shores of Bedford basin, the city