

*Seaway and Canal Tolls*

forget that Ontario also produces a good deal of valuable grain and cereal products for export. Ontario grown grains are shipped through the Welland canal and the seaway to the port of Montreal for storage there awaiting export overseas. These include winter wheat, soybeans and Ontario corn.

● (4:40 p.m.)

Also, Mr. Speaker, tolls would not be good for the great heartland of Canada, southern Ontario. In my constituency we have a very valuable installation, the iron ore docks. Pelletized iron from Marmora is loaded into huge ore carriers at Picton harbour where Long Reach meets Picton bay and Adolphus Reach, leading to lake Ontario. Most of this iron ore goes up what one might term one flight of stairs through the Welland canal into the Erie basin to Ohio steel mills.

In our district we confidently look forward to the day when Canada will be populous enough to have more steel mills and secondary associated industry in our own heartland. But some of the Marmora iron which is made into steel is sold back to Canada in the form of iron castings and steel in all its forms and tolls on our waterways only increase the cost of these products that we require. In other words, our own action in this instance would only result in a further rise in the cost of living, which I believe is one of the most vexing problems we have to deal with today.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, right beside the iron ore loading docks we have the large and modern cement plant of the Lake Ontario Portland Cement Company producing a fine product for an international market. Much of this product is exported to the United States in direct competition with American cement plants. I will not support any measures that diminish the ability of any of our industries to compete internationally or otherwise with any of their competitors. This cement plant makes a vast contribution to meeting our balance of trade problem. As hon. members know, our trade position with the United States is very much in a state of imbalance. Tolls will only tend to increase this imbalance which for so long has been a source of embarrassment to Canadian governments.

Another point concerns the interests of our small manufacturers who are importing raw materials. Tolls on the seaway only increase manufacturing costs. They also increase feed grain costs to our Ontario farmers who feed western grains in their beef and milk producing activities.

We have no toll roads in Canada; they are a thing of the past. Let us likewise have no toll-charging waterways in Canada. The Trent canal system is free. The Rideau canal system is free. They are, of course, recreational in nature and use. Let us make our great commercial waterway free also. I remind the house that the St. Lawrence seaway will still pay for itself many times over in a different way, from the revenue derived from electric power of which it produces a great deal. Let us make its navigational facilities free to the commerce of the world. I urge the government and our committees to prevent the seaway authority increasing our current costs of doing business.

**Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax):** Mr. Speaker, as a maritimer I think it is foolhardy courage that has impelled me to take part in this debate, because some of my views run contrary to those which have been expressed over and over again this afternoon by those dealing with the problem of tolls on the St. Lawrence seaway. But I think I have a suggestion that might solve the problem and I will present it at the end of a very brief contribution to the debate.

First, when I say that I enter this debate with a feeling of foolhardy courage it is because I am a representative from one of the two great seaports on the Atlantic coast, Halifax. I think I can speak for my colleague from Saint John-Albert in the province of New Brunswick as well as my colleague from Halifax in stating that maritimers have some considerable suspicion of the operations of the St. Lawrence seaway as they affect our particular area. We have seen in Saint John and Halifax the shipping season in the wintertime dwindling by weeks with every passing year; yet as maritimers we have to consider the practical effects of raising the tolls on the seaway.

In this connection I would refer first to item No. 48 of government orders which deals with the Canadian livestock feed board, something that seems to have the support of every party in this chamber and which before too many months will no doubt become an actuality. It would be useless to attempt to solve the problems of eastern Canadian livestock producers if at the same time we were to permit the cost of feed to be increased substantially by reason of raising tolls or any other reason. Therefore we do have an economic interest in seeing that the tolls are kept as low as possible.