

*Seaway and Canal Tolls*

As I understand the situation at the moment, when the hearings are concluded today the seaway authority will then be making its recommendations to the cabinet through the Minister of Transport. The cabinet then has the power, by order in council, to increase the tolls and impose the lockage fee which will have all the effects I have previously outlined.

It seems to me most imperative that parliament have an opportunity to express its opinion with respect to the effects which any increase in tolls would have. It is important that this question be discussed now rather than after the government has made a decision and has imposed these increased tolls, if the seaway authority makes such a recommendation, which preliminary statements indicate it is likely to do.

We in our party therefore feel that a discussion of this matter at this time is necessary, because this is probably the only opportunity we shall have of discussing this question before the cabinet meets in order to determine whether or not it will implement the recommendations of the seaway authority.

**Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the motion moved by the hon. member for Kindersley invoking standing order 26, I suggest that that motion meets the several conditions laid down in citation 100 of Beauchesne's fourth edition.

The first condition the motion meets under standing order 26 is that the motion involves the administrative responsibility of the government. Second, I suggest that this motion meets the condition under paragraph 2 of the same citation, in that it is a matter so pressing that the public interest will suffer if it is not given immediate attention. I think the hon. member for Kindersley, the right hon. Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam have already explained how the public interest will suffer if this matter is not attended to.

I further suggest that under paragraph 3 of citation 100, dealing with the matter of urgency of debate, this motion meets the conditions set out there also. That paragraph says that urgency within the rule does not apply to the matter itself, but means urgency of debate when the ordinary opportunities provided by the rules of the house do not permit the subject to be brought up for debate. Looking at the order paper, Mr. Speaker, and

looking at the business that has been announced and the time available for that business, it does not seem that there will be an opportunity to debate this very important matter before the cabinet may make its decision.

I suggest if the government were to give an undertaking that it will provide an opportunity for this matter to be discussed in this house before authorizing an order in council which would increase these tolls, that would satisfy the matter of urgency of debate. However, in spite of a number of requests by members of the opposition, the government has not so far indicated whether an opportunity will be provided to discuss this matter in the house before the order in council authorizing an increase is made. Unless and until the government does give such an assurance I suggest the motion does meet all the conditions outlined in citation 100 of Beauchesne's fourth edition.

**Mr. Raymond Langlois (Mégantic):** Mr. Speaker, this is one occasion on which it may truly be said that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The house is faced now with this motion put forward by the hon. member for Kindersley. We have heard the arguments advanced by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam and by the hon. member for Medicine Hat based on citations from Beauchesne. I do not see how an immediate discussion of this subject can be avoided unless the government can suggest an alternative means by which hon. members may make their views known. If it were possible to give an assurance to the house that such an opportunity would be forthcoming, we might possibly be able to dispense with the particular debate which is now being demanded.

It is my belief that the motion before us fulfils all the conditions laid down in the rules. The importance of the subject cannot be questioned, since it affects virtually the whole of the Canadian economy.

**Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Public Works):** This motion to adjourn the house under the terms of standing order 26 does not, in my view, meet the requirement of citation 100 of Beauchesne's fourth edition, for various reasons.

First, as to the question of the urgency of debate, let me say that the procedure with which we are concerned here is set out in the legislation enacted by parliament. The step now being taken is for public hearings to be