

The railroads are a serious problem in Megantic, but it would be so easy to do away with those level crossings without building overpasses. Some estimates have been prepared to this effect, and it would cost about \$1 million to move the tracks. This would eliminate practically all level crossings with the exception of the two main ones going in and from the town of Megantic.

That is why with regard to this matter I would draw the minister's attention to my riding which is one of the worst localities in the province of Quebec, and perhaps even of Canada, because the railway crosses the highway six times before leaving Megantic.

The authorities of Megantic asked me some time ago to make representations with regard to the matter, and I am sure that the minister also received some requests for improvement of the level crossing situation.

Mr. Côté (Chicoutimi): Mr. Chairman, this resolution enables me to say a few words on level crossings which are an extremely serious problem in the city of Chicoutimi.

I wrote to the Minister of Transport (Mr. McIlraith) at the request of the authorities of Chicoutimi. I take this opportunity of pointing out this correspondence to remind the minister about the problem so that he may take the matter into account when drafting the legislation which eventually will be introduced.

In Chicoutimi there are 15 or 17 level crossings throughout the city and they are quite dangerous for drivers. In this era of heavy traffic it is ridiculous to have so many level crossings in a city of approximately 40,000 inhabitants.

It might be possible to bring considerable improvement to that situation. Indeed, a few years ago, Mr. Fairweather, one of the vice presidents of the C.N.R., made quite a thorough investigation of the matter and came to the conclusion that those level crossings had to be eliminated at any cost. Along with engineers he had prepared plans to that effect, and today the C.N.R. and the Minister of Transport must have in their possession those very important plans which would provide a solution to that problem.

That is why I ask the minister to keep that in mind because that project was brought forward more than ten or 15 years ago and the people of Chicoutimi have been waiting for it so long that it should be carried out now so that many accidents would be avoided. I nearly had an accident myself while I was with my family. That is why I call the attention of the minister to that problem.

[Text]

Resolution reported and concurred in.

St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act

Mr. McIlraith thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. C-110, to amend the Railway Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: When shall the said bill be read a second time?

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if it would be the wish of the house to go on and consider second reading now?

Mr. Churchill: Yes, if the bill is ready for distribution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I understand the bill is ready for distribution.

Mr. Pickersgill: Perhaps if the bill is not ready immediately we could take second reading after considering the next resolution, and that would give the officials time to get the bill distributed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Later this day?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY AUTHORITY ACT

AMENDMENT TO INCREASE BORROWING AUTHORITY

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Transport) moved that the house go into committee to consider the following resolution:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act to provide that the authority, with the approval of the governor in council, may from time to time borrow money from Her Majesty or otherwise to an aggregate that shall not exceed at any time \$535,000,000 in lieu of \$345,000,000 which it is already authorized to borrow by section 13 of the act.

He said: The purpose of this resolution, Mr. Chairman, is to provide additional borrowing authority to obtain the funds required to enable the St. Lawrence seaway authority to undertake the twinning of the locks of the Welland canal, as announced to the House of Commons on August 2 of this year. The amount necessary for this work is estimated to be \$180 million. There is an additional \$10 million, the greater part of which will be required to provide funds for the settlement of a long standing disputed claim having to do with the cost of the diversion at the Victoria bridge. This question was only decided in 1963, that is, as to how the cost of this undertaking should be borne, and according to the decision the seaway authority has to pay approximately an additional \$11,700,000 for this capital work. They do not have the capital funds available, and part of this \$190 million will be used for that purpose.