

Supply—Transport

the thousands of families whose breadwinners work in our shipyards. I think this is a fine and imaginative program, and one which must give the minister a good deal of pride and pleasure.

I should also like to congratulate the minister for his recent announcement regarding the provision of new weather ships. These ships are indeed needed on the west coast. The old frigates, which have been serving in the Pacific, have provided poor accommodation for the crew who reside on these craft during some of the most rigorous weather that the oceans produce. These old vessels have not only been deficient in respect of conveniences and amenities for the crew while away from home, but are deficient in respect to the work they can perform at sea. I feel the provision of these new ships will make a great contribution to the provision of meteorological information which the Department of Transport so ably carries out.

Mr. Rynard: Mr. Chairman, I should like first of all to wish the Minister of Transport every success in this new portfolio which we all realize is a difficult one, including as it does the fields of air, land and water transportation.

I intend today to speak in regard to the Trent valley waterway. This waterway runs through the heartland of Ontario and is 230 miles in length, including 32 miles of canal locks, from Trenton on lake Ontario to Port Severn on the Georgian bay. This waterway, believe it or not, was started in 1830 by the imperial government as a means of defence, and transportation, and colonization in an attempt to open up the area. As hon. members know, this waterway was used by Champlain almost 350 years ago when he travelled from Georgian bay along the Trent waterway by portages where necessary to lake Ontario across the end of lake Ontario and attacked the Iroquois at approximately where the city of Syracuse, New York now stands.

The money provided by the imperial government for the development of this waterway was spent for the purpose of defence. The development of the waterway lagged for a good many years, until a man by the name of Mossom Boyd of Bobcaygeon acquired money to continue the project; but when he applied for permission to go ahead, it was denied. It was not until 1880 that Sir Charles Tupper became interested in the waterway and initiated an investigation as to the feasibility of finishing it. Following that investigation Sir Charles Tupper came to the conclusion that the waterway must be completed as fast as funds were available

to do so, but unfortunately Sir Charles Tupper was appointed high commissioner to Britain before the project could be completed, and it was allowed to lag again following his departure.

In 1892 Sam Hughes, later Sir Sam Hughes, of Lindsay became interested and undertook to have the government complete the canal. In 1896 the government changed and under the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier the canal was again allowed to lag. The people living in the area brought pressure to bear on the government of the day, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier appointed a royal commission to determine whether the waterway should be completed. This royal commission, I believe, was headed by Sir John Bertram. This commission presented a report recommending that the waterway be completed as soon as possible and the project proceeded under the Liberal government, which was defeated in 1911, but was carried on by the Conservative government of that day under Sir Robert Borden. In 1914, with the commencement of the first world war, the project was carried on as a stopgap measure by the provision of a marine railway from Swift Rapids to the Big Chute. A promise was made at that time to complete the canal with locks immediately following the end of that war. Over 40 years have now passed since then, and the same bottleneck exists now that existed at that time.

Hon. members may wonder why the government of that day ever built the marine railway there. I suggest it was simply a measure to put in a stop dam to provide water to produce electric power for the munitions plants in the town of Orillia.

During the years this waterway has become a great water highway. More boats pass through the waterway in a day now than during a month at that time. Hotels, summer camps and cottages have been built all along the route, and marine motels are now being built. The investment in tourist camps and motels which has been made by the people of this area has amounted to millions of dollars. The investment in buildings is not the only expenditure that would be made. In addition there are the cost of upkeep and maintenance, to say nothing of the new buildings that would be built if the bottleneck of the marine railways was removed representing millions of dollars paid to labour. For the staffing of those motels, hotels and marinas, thousands of dollars more would be spent in labour costs. Many of our university and senior high school students would find work in those places during the summer holidays in increased numbers.