

St. Lawrence Seaway Authority Act

shipments out of Kingston amounted to approximately a million and a half tons. One million and a half tons going through the seaway represents between \$600,000 and \$700,000 to the seaway authority under the proposed rates. Yet the former minister of transport and the seaway authority decided, for the sake of a million dollars, that this Canadian channel should be excluded from the seaway.

I believe we have something like 500 ships from Kingston which proceed down through the St. Lawrence seaway. It is necessary now to take the United States channel, go into lake Ontario and steam 18 miles back into the port of Kingston. I might say that 18 miles for 500 ships represents about \$100,000 a year in unnecessary operating costs. For the sake of \$1 million we are going to involve the shipping companies in an unnecessary expenditure of \$100,000. I claim that this has been a piece of bad planning on the part of the previous administration and it demonstrates a lack of foresight on the part of the previous minister of transport. The western end of the St. Lawrence river has been blocked off and the channel must now go through on the United States side. This has the effect of making the port of Kingston a backwater port.

We have heard some answers today and this is a question to which I should like to have an answer. Why, for the sake of \$1 million when we were spending \$300 million, did the previous administration see fit to block out the thriving Canadian port of Kingston?

Mr. McMillan: Mr. Chairman, I am interested in this resolution under which we are making available to the seaway authority additional money to complete the project. I was also interested in hearing what was said today about the Welland ship canal. I happen to live along that canal and I can assure hon. members of the committee that there is much rock in that area. I personally could not understand the early estimates of the cost of deepening that canal. I inquired about it at that time and was informed that the engineers reported that it would cost something under \$2 million as I recall it. The former minister of transport in the Liberal administration, the hon. member for Laurier, who was also the president of the St. Lawrence seaway authority certainly could not have known about the rock that happens to be under the water for miles in that area both winter and summer. He is a lawyer by profession. The hon. member for Carleton today in his remarks enunciated the principle that a minister must be responsible for those who give information in his department. I recalled that the other day when the Minister

of Finance had made an understatement of \$10 million with respect to the increased interest on the conversion loan he blamed the deputies in his own department. I believe it is much the same thing. The Minister of Finance is supposed to be a mathematician and the hon. member for Laurier is a lawyer.

I have one or two questions to direct to the Minister of Transport. Since the tolls are supposed to amortize the cost over a period of 50 years I was wondering what effect the increase we are voting here today might have on the tolls. On January 18, 1959, as reported at page 1383 of *Hansard*, the minister gave us the main features of the proposed toll structure. I wonder if the proposed tolls will be increased on all or any part of the St. Lawrence seaway because of the sum of \$335 million referred to in this resolution?

Mr. Small: Mr. Chairman, I have taken a keen interest in the subject of the St. Lawrence seaway for longer than I would care to mention and I have spoken on the subject in this chamber on previous occasions. In my comments this afternoon I shall probably refer to some of the remarks made by the hon. member for Laurier and the Leader of the Opposition.

It was related today that the seaway became a reality only after a period of many years in which many difficulties were encountered. The concept of the seaway developed about a third of a century ago, as accurately as I can place it. The idea evolved in the mind of Sir Adam Beck who conjured up a picture of power needs in Canada. He made an assessment and learned that the only way further power could be secured was through the development of the St. Lawrence seaway. He was cognizant of the fact that power could not be secured unless it were related to what was referred to as a deep waterway development through which commerce and transportation by water from the sea could go through. Efforts were made to secure agreement between the various levels of government concerned and these efforts met with varying success encountering difficulties created by the interests of the port of Montreal and the electrical power barons of the day. When a degree of accord had been reached additional difficulties were encountered from vast lobbies in the transportation and electrical fields in the United States. It began to appear unlikely that agreement could be reached. All efforts to secure accord appeared futile.

Eventually the time came when the resources of the United States became depleted. It was known that natural resources abounded