

that borrowing powers are necessary and, as the sponsor told us yesterday, although this amount is large it is not out of line with previous years. He mentioned some of the years, and I have looked up others and have found this amount to be consistent with previous years.

Hon. Gordon B. Isnor: Honourable senators, I have only a brief comment to make on one item.

As you will recall, and as was mentioned by the honourable Leader of the Opposition, I interjected yesterday a question as to whether the ice-control construction was of a permanent nature. Because of that interjection I was given rather full information as to the cost of this structure, which is to be permanent, according to the sponsor of the bill (Hon. Mr. Leonard), who outlined the various items in a businesslike way. He told us that the structure would cost \$13,942,000. Of this amount, the City of Montreal would pay \$2,500,000, leaving a balance of \$11,442,000 to be paid by the Crown, that is, by the taxpayers of Canada.

I do not say this is a subsidy, but, as in the past, the Port of Montreal and those ports on the St. Lawrence are certainly taking advantage of a situation to assist them in making it possible to further increase their trade as against the Atlantic ports of Halifax and Saint John.

I want to bring that to the attention of the honourable Senator Leonard, the sponsor of the bill, but more particularly to the attention of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority and the Government of Canada. I am sure that anyone who had \$2,500,000 to invest, with a return of over \$11 million, would be glad to do so. It appears to me that this deal is just that—an investment of \$2,500,000 to get a return of a permanent nature of over \$11 million. In addition, I think this has a very close connection with the question of tolls on the Welland Canal. There was certainly no objection from the east in respect to the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway, by reason of the fact that it serves central Canada, but I do not think consideration was given to its possible effect on the Atlantic ports.

The toll charge on the Welland Canal was part of an agreement whereby over a certain period of years of the canal's operation a small toll would be charged to be set up against the debt or the cost of the Seaway. It is now proposed, particularly by Port Arthur and Fort William, to do away with such tolls. I understand that the Port of Toronto has also advocated, by way of a resolution before the Chamber of Commerce at its annual convention, that these tolls be discontinued.

I want to point out to the Government that at the present time there is a debt of approximately \$50 million against this particular item. I would hesitate to think that any further steps should be taken to add to what was an agreement whereby over a certain period of years the St. Lawrence Seaway would pay its way.

Honourable senators, I feel justified in bringing this to the attention of the sponsor of the bill. I hope that he and the Government will take note of the matter, to ensure that no effort is made to do away with the toll, thus adding that amount to the bills of the taxpayers, and also operating to the detriment of the Atlantic ports.

Hon. Mr. Lambert: May I ask my honourable friend if he has any information or authoritative figures to show whether or not the ports of Halifax and Saint John have suffered, in comparison with the traffic in and out of those two ports in previous years, particularly during that period since the Seaway has been in operation?

Hon. Mr. Isnor: Anyone following the progress of business, and having the figures before him, would realize the loss of business in that connection.

Hon. Mr. Lambert: May I suggest that is not quite an answer to the question I raised. Has the volume of traffic in and out of these two ports declined since the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway and, if so, to what extent?

Hon. Mr. Isnor: I did not expect to be asked a question like that, let alone answer in such detail. While we had an increase of one per cent in the traffic at the Port of Halifax last year, I contend we would have had a much greater increase if it had not been for the efforts made by the ports on the St. Lawrence River.

Hon. Mr. Horner: May I say, in connection with what the honourable senator from Halifax-Dartmouth (Hon. Mr. Isnor) has said, I am somewhat in the same position as he is. The Port of Churchill is not getting all the business it should get, because of the question of the payment of tolls. Like my honourable friend, I do not like to see trade carried on to the detriment of our port, which should be doing five times the business it is now doing.

Hon. Mr. Isnor: If the Port of Churchill could get rid of some of its terrible ice conditions, naturally it would increase its business.

Hon. Harold Connolly (Halifax North): Honourable senators, the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Brooks) in his remarks