

Supply—Public Works

former parliamentary secretary to the former minister of public works, who on June 1, 1965, answered my question. I quote from page 1866 of *Hansard*:

Mr. Speaker, the question of the hon. member for York-Humber (Mr. Cowan) was raised during the oral question period last Thursday. He asked whether the minister could advise the house if any individual or company which has dumped thousands of tons of fill into Lake Ontario between the Humber River and Etobicoke Creek in the past few years received permission in advance as required by the Navigable Waters Protection Act. The short answer to this question is no, Mr. Speaker.

As recently as last July 19 I saw trucks dumping fill into lake Ontario off the shore of Etobicoke. I sent a wire to a certain cabinet minister in Ottawa and asked him if he would send me a wire informing me when permission had been granted to continue filling the lake because we had been told, under date of January 21, 1965, that one developer had to stop filling. I never got an answer to my telegram last July and I have not had an answer to that telegram to this day. I will admit that they stopped filling that afternoon.

I followed the trucks to ascertain where they were getting the fill. I thought that in this case they were getting the fill from the Toronto subway. I was interested to find a basement was being excavated for a Dominion store at the corner of Dufferin and King Streets. There was a line-up of trucks getting fill. They would go about two miles over to Etobicoke, dump the fill into lake Ontario without any permission from the Department of Public Works and return to the corner of Dufferin and King Streets. I followed these trucks in my own car so I know what I am talking about. I was interested in the fact that my wire stopped this procedure, but I have never received an answer to that wire.

What is going on up there is beyond belief. We have the case of Mr. McCallum, the solicitor for the firm that is trying to build the two twin towers, who says that the question of whether the fill is there or not is not of the greatest concern. The reeve of the village of Long Branch, Mr. Thomas Berry, wants this fill put in, and the reeve of this small village of 8,000 population says that the fill is in now and it will not be taken out. "Do not underestimate the power of the developers." This is the reeve of a small village in the province of Ontario advising the government how things are conducted in the village of Long Branch.

[Mr. Cowan.]

I should like to read you two different letters bearing on this matter. After considerable protest from the residents of Long Branch, Mimico, New Toronto, Etobicoke and on my own part, a letter was written by an engineer in the Toronto office of the federal Department of Public Works. I have sat across the desk from this man and talked to him on several occasions. Here is the letter under date of January 21, 1965:

The Director,
Millgate Investments,
2788 Bathurst Street,
Toronto, Ontario.

This department has on a number of occasions received complaints concerning filling operations carried out by you during the last two years at the above mentioned location. At the time these complaints were investigated and reported upon by our engineers, it was revealed that none of the complaints related to possible interference to navigation.

It has been brought to my attention recently that not only has this fill been placed without prior approval of the Department of Works, pursuant to the Navigable Waters Protection Act, but then in addition thereto the fill was left unprotected and consequently caused erosion under the wave action of the lake. I further understand that the eroded material has been deposited along the shore to such an extent that a storm sewer outfall adjacent to the fill is now 150 feet from the shore line, a true indication that the material is being deposited in navigable waters with a possible detrimental effect on navigation.

I was further informed that as of December 1, 1964, the fill extended 470 feet into Lake Ontario with an average width of 300 feet.

May I interject here to say that is about two and a half acres. This land has been valued at either \$100,000 or \$150,000 per acre and there are over 70 acres of filled land along the shore now. You can see that the people who are playing fast and loose with the Department of Public Works are playing a game worth millions of dollars. This fill extended 470 feet into Lake Ontario in December, 1964. I continue quoting from the letter:

Our engineers—

This is under date of January 21, 1965.

—recommend that adequate steps be taken immediately—

Remember that word "immediately" because I am going to show you how long immediately is.

—to remedy the existing situation to prevent erosion of the fill. It would be appreciated if you could inform us of the method you wish to take to prevent this erosion prior to carrying out this work.

As you are aware, Part I of the Navigable Waters Protection Act generally requires that approval by the Department of Public Works of any work that is to be built in navigable waters.