

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: I am sorry to say that I have no statement as to whether it is paying its way or not. I hope it is doing better than a certain harbour a little farther down the river.

Hon. JACQUES BUREAU: Honourable members, if the honourable leader will allow me, I should like to say that to date the Harbour Commission of Three Rivers has, I believe, been meeting its obligations. In 1927 a sum was appropriated by the Public Works Department for the improvement of the docks occupied by the Dominion Coal Company under lease from the Three Rivers Harbour Commission. In 1929 a law was passed authorizing a \$2,000,000 loan by the Government to that Commission. After the passing of this law it was agreed between the Dufresne Construction Company—who had the \$200,000 contract from the Department of Public Works—and the present contractors, with the approval of the Department of Public Works, that the contract should be transferred to the present contractors, and the amount of \$200,000 paid out of the loan of \$2,000,000. Consequently the contract was transferred, and liability for the \$200,000 was assumed by the Three Rivers Harbour Commission.

The docks at Three Rivers, where the Dominion Coal Company stores very large quantities of Nova Scotia coal in order to supply the requirements of the paper mills at Grand'Mere, Shawinigan Falls and Three Rivers, were badly in need of repairs. At the time of the letting of the contract the work that was proposed involved an expenditure of more than the \$2,000,000 authorized by the Act, and there was a tacit understanding between the Harbour Commissioners and the Dominion Government that there would be an additional grant to cover the difference between the amount authorized and the amount necessary to complete the work. The Commissioners stipulated in the contract that unless the grant was made they would stop the work when the moneys available were exhausted, and the contractors waived any claim for damages against the Harbour Commission on that ground, should the Government fail to grant the money. Under the supervision of Mr. Swan, an expert in harbour works and, I believe, the man who laid out Vancouver harbour, the plan for Three Rivers was prepared. I am informed—I cannot state it positively—that some changes have lately been made in the plan.

Though there may have been a slight falling off in navigation this year by reason

Hon. Mr. BELCOURT.

of the fact that some of the paper mills are operating only part time, and others not at all, there has been otherwise a steady increase at Three Rivers, and the improvements that are being made to the harbour there are necessary in order that proper accommodation may be provided.

So far as I know, the members of the former Board have complied with all the provisions of the law regarding the sinking fund, and every obligation has been met by them. As the work progresses the Harbour Commissioners issue debentures and deposit with the Finance Department an amount equal to the amount paid to the contractors. This sum of \$700,000 is required to finish a work which is essential to the welfare of the St. Maurice Valley region, and, I think, of benefit to the country generally.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Not having stopped at the port of Three Rivers for some years, I was delighted, when passing there this week, to see the modern works that have been installed. There has been a transformation in the harbour. I have no doubt that Three Rivers is developing rapidly, and in view of the industries tributary to it, I think this expenditure on the harbour will be money well spent.

Hon. Mr. BELCOURT: I should like to confirm what my leader has said. I know the locality very well. I spent many of my younger years in Three Rivers, and have frequently had occasion to go back. Every time I have done so, particularly during the past ten years, I have marvelled at the tremendous industrial development that has taken place. As \$2,000,000 has already been spent there, I think the additional expenditure of \$700,000 is well warranted.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I have no knowledge of any change in the plans, but I do know that the work under the \$2,000,000 vote has been progressing very well. The work has become necessary largely owing to the rapid development of the whole St. Maurice Valley country. I know that last fall the vote of the Harbour Commissioners at Three Rivers was almost exhausted, and that if the works are to be completed Parliament must provide further funds. Although the expenditure exceeded the vote of 1929, no further vote could be passed until this session. In my opinion the expenditure of \$700,000 is entirely defensible.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the third time, and passed.