

Supply—Agriculture

Mr. Howe was ignoring the whole thing. After the last election this government began to show an interest in the protests which were launched by Mr. Jobin—I think he should be given credit—and the importunities of the Saskatchewan government. They felt it was quite possible the lakehead area was going to fall behind the United States lakehead area, that is Duluth and Superior, in being ready for this particular situation. The local people, therefore, rallied, and the member who previously spoke, as the mayor of the city of Fort William, and the council of the city of Port Arthur, began to get interested and this whole pattern began to develop.

But I must say again that we would not get really definitive action until there was a move by the government and the Minister of Transport was able to talk to the representatives of the cities, to the chambers of commerce, to the government officials of Manitoba, to listen to representations from other places in the west and to decide to go ahead with the bill.

In the last election campaign before March 31 again I was out on the hustings and people were saying: Now that Howe is gone, the main thing to do is to have another link in the Diefenbaker chain; why elect an opposition member to parliament which is all you will be. We will get such things as the lakehead harbour commission only in that way. As the minister and maybe some of the members of this house can gather, in the next electoral campaign, if I should be around fighting it, I shall have the opportunity of pointing to this magnificent terminal dock and of saying: Having an opposition member is not against you; these are the things you get for being an opposition member. So figuring on this election campaign four years from now, if I have the opportunity I shall be able gratefully to refer to this contribution to the lakehead economy and the economy of the whole country that the minister has introduced.

I have a few minor points that I want to make in detail but I will do that in committee, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to give credit where credit is due; and a great deal of it is due to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hees) for the part which was played by him and to the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Green) in this matter. I hope it is a real indication that merit triumphs over everything in judging these particular cases.

As I sit down I should like to say that maybe there is an indication in this fact that we are going to have a board that operates and brings the two cities together. This may be an indication of what the mayor of Fort William, the hon. member for Fort William

(Mr. Badanai), has sought in the past. This may be an indication that eventually we are going to move to amalgamation and that within a very short time the Canadian lakehead can become one of the largest cities in Canada rather than remain, as is the situation at the present time, two cities that really in essence are one social and economic unit.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the standing committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines.

SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Rea in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Administration Service—

1. Departmental administration, including advisory committee on agricultural services, \$674,164.

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Chairman, this is the first time I have had the opportunity of presenting the estimates of the Department of Agriculture to the committee. I do not intend to contribute to delaying their rapid passage through the committee by making a long speech. However, I think perhaps I should say something about the general situation of agriculture, particularly during the past year. It has been a year which has been marked by some difference in trends from the previous year and some of these I should like to draw attention to in particular.

Despite marketing problems associated with some agricultural products in 1957, the year was a reasonably successful one for Canadian agriculture. Farm cash income declined slightly from the 1956 level but it was \$47 million higher than the average for the ten-year period 1948-1957 and higher than the amount realized in five years out of this ten-year period.

Smaller prairie grain crops were mainly responsible for the slight decline in farm cash income last year. In comparison with many recent years, growing conditions on the prairies were far from ideal. Although spring came early and the crop was planted in good time, cool weather in late spring and early summer retarded growth and plant development.

Over much of the region periods of extremely hot July weather, coupled with drying winds, inadequate moisture, and widely ranging hail storms resulted in reduced yields. These lower returns were only partly offset by higher returns from the sale of livestock and dairy products.

In contrast to the prairies, the rest of Canada in 1957 experienced generally excellent growing conditions for small grains,