

We visited that new mine where there is very extensive development with nickel.

Up to this time I could not give more of my time to visiting, but I do hope to do more this year, if we can get through this session by summertime. I hope we will be through in July.

Mr. DUMAS: Thank you.

Item 186 agreed to.

Item 187 Explosives Act Administration\$ 95,418

Mr. DUMAS: On this item, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister if the department has received any request from the mining industry to the effect that the regulations be amended to increase the permissible maximum load of explosives that may be transported by truck from 10,000 lbs. to 20,000 lbs.

Mr. COMTOIS: Yes. In the course of the years we have received many representations on the matter. The mining industry in some districts wants to have the regulations changed or modified so that trucking companies or truck contractors might be allowed to transport more tonnage by truck. The actual limit is 10,000 lbs.

On account of the fact that some districts are so far away, the main reason is that they should be allowed to go up from 10,000 lbs. to 20,000 lbs. But up to now we have been very reluctant.

However, the matter is under study. I think Mr. Kimbell who is in charge of the explosives branch might give us some details and information about the matter.

Mr. DUMAS: Before we hear from Mr. Kimbell may I ask if it is possible that the department will change the regulations?

Mr. COMTOIS: Not likely. It can be done, but we should have some very good and very serious reasons for changing them.

My experience with the occurrences or cases of accidents we have had during the years is that our department must be very very careful in the matter, and very prudent.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you care to advance any arguments in support of your suggestion, Mr. Dumas?

Mr. DUMAS: I think we would like to hear from Mr. Kimbell.

Mr. H. P. KIMBELL (*Chief, Explosives Division*): Mr. Chairman, we have given a great deal of thought to increasing the load limit. We always consider the economics of any matter with which the Explosives Act is related. But in considering the economics of it, we must bear in mind that an accident with explosives can have very serious consequences.

We read in the newspapers every day about the slaughter on the highways. I have had very very serious doubts about whether we should increase the number of pounds of dynamite regardless of the number of trips on our highways.

In view of this accident rate, I think that five tons of dynamite in one load is enough.

Moreover, if we raised the limit, it would tend to take the explosives off the safer means of transport—the railways—and to put them on the public highways where we would have to deal with all sorts of drivers; that is, it would take them off the private right-of-way of the railway and place them on the public right-of-way where we do not have the same control of the drivers.