

*Seaway and Canal Tolls*

Further on it states:

Pursuant to its obligation to promote the sale of grain produced in Canada in world markets the board endeavoured to keep its prices for export wheat competitive at all times—

The board quoted separate daily asking prices for wheat (a) in store Pacific ports, (b) in store Fort William/Port Arthur and (c) in store Churchill. Export selling prices c.i.f. St. Lawrence ports, c.i.f. Atlantic ports and, as required, in store at intermediate seaway ports were also announced by the board.

The purpose of regional pricing was to maintain the competitive position of export wheat in major commercial markets irrespective of the port of shipment.

Further on it states the following, and this applies to the 1964-65 crop year:

Shipments from Fort William/Port Arthur—380 million bushels.

As other speakers have stated, the president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool estimated that a 10 per cent increase in seaway tolls would mean an additional 1½ cents a bushel in the cost of exporting wheat. Moving 380 million bushels of wheat through the lakehead at an extra cost of 1½ cents a bushel would mean roughly \$5 million out of the farmers' pockets. I think this is a very good argument against increasing the seaway tolls.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer to a statement made by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. This statement was made in 1964 at which time there was pressure from U.S. interests to increase the seaway tolls. I think it should be put on the record because I do not believe that it has been put on the record so far. I will just read part of it:

The federation delegates took another look at the organization's policy position on St. Lawrence seaway tolls at this year's annual meeting. They resolved to strongly oppose any increase in tolls on the section of the seaway from Montreal to lake Ontario, to oppose any toll charges whatever on the Welland canal, and to oppose the principle of recovering capital costs of the seaway through the collection of tolls.

This will strengthen the arguments of the member for Grey-Bruce (Mr. Winkler).

The report states further:

In making these decisions, the federation delegates had these considerations in mind. First, they recognized that the seaway was built to benefit all Canadians through lowering costs of products moving through the waterway for both the domestic and export markets. Second, it was pointed out that the Montreal to lake Ontario section of the seaway is the only waterway in North America which is subject to tolls. Third, that while there may be some obligation and justification for attempting to recover operating and maintenance costs by charging tolls, any attempt to recover

[Mr. Pascoe.]

capital costs in the same way would defeat the purpose of the seaway by making its utilization uneconomic for many users.

There is one more paragraph which stresses the point I am trying to make. It says:

Tolls on the seaway, of course, affect farmers in two ways.

Then, speaking for western grain farmers, it continues:

Export grain transported through the waterway loses some degree of competitiveness in world markets, or farmers receive less returns for their product. In the second place, the costs of goods that farmers buy stand to be higher, whenever such goods, or the materials from which they are made, are transported through the seaway.

That is the point which I was trying to emphasize, that any increase in seaway tolls would affect the prairies. Of course, it also affects other parts of the country. It would affect us in two ways.

As I stated at the outset of my remarks, this debate has been most necessary because it made it possible to put on the record arguments that must be carefully considered by the government and by the seaway authority. These arguments against increased seaway tolls must be pressed home now. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) has clearly stated that a decision will be made soon. I will read what he said as reported in *Hansard* on March 24 at page 3086. He is referring to discussions between the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority and the St. Lawrence Corporation of the United States. He speaks about the possibility of a revision of the existing tolls, and says:

I understand that the parties to this discussion now feel they are fairly close to agreement as to what they will be prepared to recommend to the two governments.

To me that indicates that a decision has been taken and a recommendation will be made to the government very shortly.

In briefs presented to the standing committee on transport and communications recommendations have been made for a transportation authority which would have the power to work out an over-all policy for all transportation by rail, by air, by bus and by water. I believe it is necessary to have such an over-all transportation policy. I believe such a policy will evolve eventually. In the meantime I support the arguments presented today against any increase in seaway tolls.

**Mr. Lawrence E. Kindt (MacLeod):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak for a few moments