

the intention of the harbour commission nor the people of British Columbia to come back to parliament for further grants. I would not promise that, because I believe that the development in the port will be so great and so profitable that the harbour board will be able to come back and ask for further loans, and that this parliament will grant their requests, knowing that it is good national business and in the interests of the whole Dominion to make such expenditures.

Mr. CLARK: Mr. Chairman, I support this resolution, and I wish to congratulate the minister on bringing it forward at this early sitting. My hon. friend from Halifax (Mr. Maclean) has asked whether we support this expenditure because of anticipated developments in the grain trade. I would answer: No, because of the actual demand which exists to-day on the part of the grain growers of the prairies. They demand facilities for handling their grain through the western port. The facilities at present are not sufficient to accommodate their demands, and consequently an immediate increase is necessary. To-day there are many grain growers on the prairies who would like to send their grain via Vancouver—I know many of them myself—and they cannot avail themselves of that outlet because there are no facilities to handle more than a certain quantity of grain. I repeat, the necessity for greater facilities exists now.

I think I can illustrate by the general growth in trade through the port of Vancouver that there is a necessity for increased facilities in handling this commodity, and I will use the Panama canal as the basis of my illustration. The canal was opened for traffic in 1915. From that year to 1920 the freight rates were so prohibitive that no traffic moved from Vancouver via the canal—practically none. In 1920, however, the rates became normal and traffic was resumed. If we go back to 1913, that is before the Panama canal was opened, we find the total number of ocean-going vessels which docked in Vancouver was 132. We can eliminate the intervening period up to 1920 because no bottoms were available. In 1920, the first year after the war in which ocean rates began to fall, a total of 333 ocean-going ships entered the port. In 1921 a total of 496, of which 103 used the Panama canal. That is practically the first year that the Panama canal was used in so far as shipping from the port of Vancouver is concerned. In 1922 for the first nine months—I do not think the figures are available for the full year—509 ocean-going ships used the port of Vancouver.

[Mr. J. H. King.]

Now for the imports from and exports to Europe through the port of Vancouver via the Panama canal. In 1921 the exports were 154,513 tons; in 1922 they increased to 470,272 tons—more than three times the amount in one year. The imports in 1921 via the Panama canal were 20,416 tons; in 1922, 149,553 tons—or practically a little over seven times the amount in one year. I use that illustration as a basis to demonstrate why it is feasible to ship grain via the Panama canal. Some doubt did exist as to whether or not grain would heat and thereby deteriorate in its passage through the canal, but I am assured that that theory is completely exploded, as pointed out by the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Stevens).

The member for Kindersley (Mr. Carmichael) stated, I think, that he did not approve of the method of loans. But I would point out, first, that this money is essentially for the benefit of growers of grain on the prairies, and, secondly, that Vancouver is going to pay for these facilities—and we are not complaining. As the hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Hocken) pointed out, we are extremely modest and we could not adopt any other course than that of paying for the facilities which are required for the western grain growers.

Mr. COOTE: The hon. member says that Vancouver will pay for these facilities. Is it not a fact that the shipments that pass through Vancouver harbour will eventually pay for them?

Mr. CLARK: The harbour commissioners will run this thing as a business. The port of Vancouver will pay through their collections.

Mr. COOTE: And the wheat that goes through there will pay its share.

Mr. CLARK: Oh yes, it will pay its share.

Mr. DUFF: It is the business that will pay, not the port of Vancouver.

Mr. CLARK: The question of economy has been raised, and I certainly support that principle. But I would point out that the present elevator capacity of the port of Vancouver is 1,250,000 bushels, and it is proposed to increase that capacity to the extent of 500,000 bushels. Now, we got that capacity of 1,250,000 bushels at a cost of from \$800,000 to \$900,000, but in order to get an increase of 500,000 bushels we must pay \$400,000, or half the original cost. I understand also that the original cost included the working plant, whereas this is only storage. I think the minister should give us some light on this point.