

Supply—Transport

wheat in storage at Churchill ready to move out. I would suggest that now is the time to store it there. It may very well be done by having wheat shipped there in a damp condition, dried in these very fine facilities and stored in bins. It would then be safe until needed for shipment.

Mr. Ross (Souris): I want to support what the member for Saskatoon has said. As I stated last night I had the privilege of visiting Churchill last week end and inspecting the splendid storage facilities there. I asked the official in charge about this drying equipment. He said that to his knowledge—

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to interrupt the hon. member—

Mr. Ross (Souris): I was coming to the question I want to ask.

Mr. Chevrier: —but after all I think we must be fair. If I can help it, I am not going to allow a debate on wheat. I am not the minister responsible for wheat, and I do not profess to know anything about wheat. Furthermore, what we are discussing now is a matter concerning the national harbours board and that is not the item on which we are. We are on the Hudson Bay railway, but we have been talking about the port of Churchill for the last half hour. I try to be patient. I do not want to interrupt continually, but I think in fairness to the minister who has these estimates we should keep to the item. I do not mind getting away from the item now and then, but we have spent at least thirty or thirty-five minutes discussing the port of Churchill and matters which do not concern me but which concern the wheat board.

Mr. Ross (Souris): The question I want to ask concerns the Minister of Transport. I was going to lead to it by simply stating that the official at Churchill informed me there had never been two complete carloads of grain dried in that plant. There is certainly a splendid storage capacity there now for over 2 million bushels. I wanted to ask the minister when this committee for the allocation of box cars was set up. As I say, there are people who are still dissatisfied about the allocation of box cars. I received correspondence about that subject today, and I should like to be able to tell these people how long this committee has been functioning.

Mr. Chevrier: The committee has been functioning for two weeks. I have been getting a number of telegrams, just as the hon. member has. I have replied to them along the lines I indicated last evening and again tonight; that is the best information I have available, and I have been giving it to these people.

Mr. Bate: I intend to say only a few words about this box car shortage. I believe there was about as much grain lying out in my constituency this winter as in any constituency in Saskatchewan. I realize that the minister and his department have nothing to do with the box car shortage, but I sincerely hope that after all that has been said they are cognizant of the fact that we want these cars to move not only the grain that has been in the elevators, which has been damp and tough all winter, but also the crop that has yet to be threshed.

Mr. Knight: I wanted to ask the minister about this deficit for 1951 of \$400,000. Was that all in respect of the railroad? Then, the deficit seems to have been reduced to \$250,000 for last year.

Mr. Chevrier: It was all in respect of the railways.

Mr. Knight: I see that we have a 1951-52 deficit, and that amounted to \$250,000, a decrease I am glad to say of \$150,000. To what does the minister attribute that decrease? I presume to increased traffic.

Mr. Chevrier: Increased movement of grain.

Mr. Knight: If we follow this thing to its logical conclusion, the conclusion is that if a sufficient quantity of grain were shipped over that route, that deficit of \$250,000 would disappear and the railway would be out of the red. In other words, what the railway needs, in order to take it off the back of the taxpayers in this country, is more traffic. Is that the way the minister would interpret the situation, namely, that more traffic would remedy the situation and that the railway would come out of the red.

Mr. Chevrier: Yes; as I said, it is due to the increased movement of grain and also to the increased defence traffic up to the port.

Item agreed to.

Railway and steamship services—

Prince Edward Island car ferry and terminals—

493. To provide for the payment during the fiscal year 1951-52 to the Canadian National Railway company (hereinafter called the national company) upon applications approved by the Minister of Transport made from time to time by the national company to the Minister of Finance and to be applied by the national company in payment of the deficit (certified by the auditors of the national company) in the operation of the Prince Edward Island car ferry and terminals arising in the calendar year 1951, \$1,280,000.

Mr. McLure: I am pleased with one thing in connection with this item. It has now found its way under a new heading. It used to appear as a deficit. It is now in with other company and comes under services. I must say that "service" is the correct name