

Supply—Public Works

various periods each summer for the past several years including 1955-56.

Mr. Hahn: Is the minister satisfied that the new dredge which has been put into operation is adequate to serve the purpose for which it was designed in respect to keeping the channel free of silt?

Mr. Winters: I am satisfied on that point, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I just want to deal for a few moments with the modest dredging requirements of Kootenay West, and I can assure the minister that I shall present my argument in a most restrained manner. I do so because of changed circumstances on the Arrow lakes.

I have discussed this to some extent with some of the minister's officials but in view of the changed circumstances I am somewhat afraid that an engineer who has possibly emigrated from Ontario to British Columbia might not be fully acquainted with the past circumstances and the current needs.

This dredging on the Arrow lakes was commenced about 55 years ago by the federal government to make it possible for the passenger ships of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the stern wheelers, to go between the upper and lower lakes and it has been carried out continuously throughout the years because it was necessary.

Now, some of our people are afraid that because this passenger service has now ceased—there is no passenger service from one end of the Arrow lakes to the other; there are two services, one on the upper and one on the lower lakes but there are no passenger vessels going through the narrows—the departmental officials may come to the conclusion that dredging is not required in the narrows. As a matter of fact, it is required as much as ever. Where there is a lessening of passenger traffic there is an increase in the use of the narrows by tugs and as a matter of fact most of these tugs have a deeper draught than the former stern wheelers that were running up and down the lakes. These tugs tow logs, haul ore and barges and things of that sort.

These bars shift almost every year. Years ago the minister's officials used to conduct quite a comprehensive survey of the whole narrows and take levels and so on. I do not think there has been as much expended in that direction in recent years but because of the shifting bars and the continual washing in of the banks of the Columbia into the centre of the river in the narrows between the upper and lower lakes, annual and constant dredging is necessary.

[Mr. Winters.]

I urge the minister to make certain that there is a thorough investigation of the situation and the needs of the lumber companies, mining companies and other industries before considering the suggestion of not providing in the estimates for dredging on any portion of the Arrow lakes.

Mr. MacLean: Mr. Chairman, I hesitated because I thought the minister might want to make some comment on what has just been said. I rise now to ask if the minister might consider giving a very brief résumé of the planned program for dredging in Prince Edward Island for this season.

Mr. Winters: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might give that information when we are on item 374, which is the harbours and rivers engineering branch detailed by provinces.

Item agreed to.

Dredging—

368. Construction or acquisition of plant and equipment, \$379,150.

Mr. McBain: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister one question. I think it was back in the year 1952 when the public works dredge No. 117 sank in Port Stanley harbour resulting in the loss of the life of the captain and one of his crew. Could the minister advise me if that dredge has been replaced or if any consideration is being given to replacing the dredge which sank?

Mr. Winters: May I answer that when we are on the item under Ontario?

Item agreed to.

Graving docks—

369. Maintenance and operation, \$979,200.

Mr. Green: Mr. Chairman, this item has to do with graving docks. I notice in the details on page 476 there is a notation to the effect that the appropriation for the Prince Rupert drydock is no longer required. As you know, that drydock was sold.

Has the government any plans for establishing a drydock in Prince Rupert? I mention that because I notice further down on the list of estimates provision is made for drydock subsidies, one being the Burrard drydock in North Vancouver and the other the Saint John drydock in New Brunswick. Would the government be willing to pay a subsidy for the operation of a drydock in Prince Rupert or are there any other plans in contemplation which would lead to the re-establishment of a drydock there?

There have been great developments in northern British Columbia. Prince Rupert is the terminus of the Canadian National line across central British Columbia and certainly