

Lakehead Harbour Commissioners

Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, the cities of Fort William and Port Arthur, Canadian National Railways and the Canadian trucking associations incorporated.

The city of Port Arthur has some 180 acres adjoining its boundary with Fort William and located on the waterfront, together with an equal area of water lot property. The city of Fort William has a small parcel adjoining this site, a relatively large water lot area and approximately 200 acres on the lakeward side of island No. 2. Both cities have agreed to make the property available to the commissioners for harbour development. The Minister of Public Works (Mr. Green) announced in the house on June 6 that a consulting firm has been retained to carry out surveys and prepare plans for a lakehead harbour terminal estimated to cost \$3 million to \$4 million. The logical site for the terminus, if soil investigation proves its suitability, is astride the boundary between the two cities. The commissioners would also have harbour dues and water lot lease revenues, which last year amounted to \$12,000 and \$1,800 respectively.

The bill to incorporate a body to manage the harbours of Port Arthur and Fort William as one harbour, to be known as the lakehead harbour commissioners, is the logical forward step in the increased development that is expected upon completion of the St. Lawrence seaway. It is important not only to the immediate area but also as a distribution point that will serve the prairie provinces.

The bill is similar to the one passed in April, 1957, to incorporate the harbour commissioners for Windsor, Ontario, with the exception that as both Port Arthur and Fort William should have representation both city councils will each appoint one commissioner and three commissioners will be appointed by the governor in council. The commissioners will have jurisdiction over all the harbour fronting both the cities and, as is the case with the Windsor harbour, revenues remaining over the operating expenses, etc., will be paid to the receiver general.

I might say that when the bill is given second reading it is my intention to move that it be referred to the standing committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines. I am sure the bill will commend itself to the house as a forward step in the development and expansion of traffic through the lakehead.

Mr. Hubert Badanai (Fort William): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed with a great deal of pleasure that I welcome the introduction of Bill No. C-26 which will enable the establishment of a harbour commission for the lakehead and, what is more important of course, the construction of harbour installations

which will provide facilities for ocean-going vessels. I welcome the statement of the minister because as far as Fort William and Port Arthur are concerned it is good news.

Fort William, being the largest city in northwestern Ontario, will be one of the principal beneficiaries. By saying so I do not wish to minimize the importance of the city of Port Arthur. As a matter of fact, by common consent with my friend, the hon. member for Port Arthur (Mr. Fisher), we look upon each city as being equal.

The coming of the St. Lawrence seaway will bring the oceans of the world to the door of this mid-continental heartland 1,250 miles from the city of Montreal. In its two cities, seven towns, 25 organized townships and 11 improvement districts live approximately 200,000 persons. They comprise but one-twenty-fifth of the population of the province of Ontario but inhabit more than half the province representing about one person per square mile.

In the speedy pace of the economic development of Canada during the past decade or since the war northwestern Ontario has achieved much. In gross production, in development of resources and industrial development it has made great strides. Its contribution to the national production has been estimated at more than \$250 million annually. Yet this great area of immense potentiality and great promise is known little by the rest of Canada.

The lakehead ports of Fort William and Port Arthur handle upward of 11 million tons of freight each year, which is a greater tonnage than the combined freight cargo of Toronto and Hamilton. No accurate assessment can be made at the present time of the increase in tonnage after the seaway is in operation. An expansion is expected, but it will depend upon various factors such as the coastal trading regulations; seaway tolls; great lakes pilots and wage rates paid to seamen, which will definitely influence costs to foreign ships.

The grain trade is an international business, competitive on a world-wide basis. Consequently grain freight rates are protected at a low level by statute, and doubtless any burden placed upon this trade by harbour dues or tolls would be considered unwise.

I am not over-enthusiastic about the imposition of tolls. Before a definite policy is established in this regard it will be necessary to make a detailed study of the situation, especially when we are dealing with grain shipments and other price-sensitive commodities.

The movement of grain varies from year to year according to crop conditions, but