

Supply—Transport

I am speaking at this time. I feel that in this particular department there is too much of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing.

During the past year certain developments have taken place in my riding to which I should like to draw the attention of the house. One of these developments relates to the Langley airport. This is a civilian airport which is used for agricultural purposes as well because there is a distribution centre there for insecticides. This particular airport requires attention. Certain work has been done during the past year, but it would appear that two more years of continuous work will be required before the airport is put into first class shape. I believe certain representations have been made by organizations there, and certainly I have done likewise, with respect to further financial assistance to make that a good civilian airport. I am wondering if the minister would care to make any comment in this respect, in view of the fact there is no item in the estimates to cover this work. Would the minister care to comment on what his department intends to do with this airport?

The other matter, I mentioned this earlier, is the fact that it was the intention of the government to purchase the White Rock airport for the purpose of making it a secondary airport to the Vancouver international. I was rather hoping the minister would outline to the house something of what is intended to be done at that site during the ensuing year.

During the past years I have drawn to the attention of the department the need for a union depot at a more favourable location in New Westminster to take care of the Great Northern and Canadian National Railways. I am pleased to note that latest reports would indicate a site has been purchased and a depot is to be constructed on that site.

During the latter part of last year it was my privilege to be with the minister at the opening of the New Westminster dock, one which had been commenced before he came into office. It is certainly going to serve that community well, if I can get the right hand of the government to know what the left hand is doing.

There are many problems in my riding which relate to this Department of Transport and with which I could deal at this time, such as the Port Mann shops and the other airports I have mentioned. I come back, however, particularly at this question of the channel in the Fraser river. This matter has been brought to the attention of this house on more than one occasion. It is one that is in need of a great deal of attention. I am

[Mr. Hahn.]

fully aware of the fact that the Minister of Transport is not in charge of dredging, but he is in charge of transport in this country. The Department of Public Works is in charge of dredging but because the Minister of Transport is in charge of transport I refer to him the question of keeping open the river channel for transportation purposes.

I find, as I have tried to point out in the past, that we are still having difficulty in trying to keep the Fraser river open. As I mentioned, last year we opened a new dock costing \$1½ million for the purpose of transferring goods to the ships which would take the goods down stream. I have here an article from *The British Columbian* of January 12, 1956, and headed, "Harbour Business Drops Off Slightly". It reads:

Port of New Westminster export and import traffic slowed during the year 1955, according to statistics issued today by the harbour commission.

Export tonnage totalled 876,661 tons as against 910,240 tons in 1954, while imports totalled 27,113 tons as against 45,332 tons the previous year. Ship arrivals were 435 as against 439.

Although the late fall business was good, the heaviest decline during the calendar year was in wheat exports, down nearly 2 million bushels. Shipments totalled 3,568,000 bushels.

On the surface it would appear that possibly the reason for the decline in the shipping industry, in so far as shipping on the Fraser river was concerned, was largely due to this fall in our grain shipment. But, Mr. Chairman, that is not the whole story because more vessels called than had previously called. We find that more and more shipping is done at half load, and I must say that is not nearly satisfactory. The city council of New Westminster recognized that something had to be done. I notice that according to the annual report for 1953-54, the New Westminster harbour commissioners are one body over which the Minister of Transport exercises some control. The city council realized that there was some difficulty here and something had to be done because the river channel was not being kept open at all times, so they decided to discover for themselves just where the trouble spots were.

I have here another clipping I should like to read. It is from the Vancouver Province of January 13, 1956. It is entitled, "Royal City"—that is New Westminster—"Plans River Soundings with C.N.R. ferry."

City council will make its own soundings of the Fraser river.

Negotiations are now under way to install an automatic sounding device on the C.N.R. vessel *Canora* at a cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000.

Federal department of public works is responsible for river soundings but charts are only prepared three or four times a year.

With soundings taken on the *Canora* the city would have at least three checks a week on silting conditions in the river.