

*The Budget—Mr. Gendron*

• (3:10 p.m.)

I am coming to my first point, the one dealing with through traffic. Where does that use come from? Let us consider first of all the privileged situation of that sea port.

The Gros-Cacouna port is five miles east of Rivière-du-Loup, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence river, 101 miles east of Quebec, 80 miles from the Maine and New Brunswick borders across from the mouth of the Saguenay river and Tadoussac. The average depth of the water there is 100 feet and the port is ice free the year round. As we will see further, specialized studies have shown that Gros-Cacouna benefits from an exceptional geographic situation, being at the crossroads of the international shipping lines, of the railway lines connecting the Gaspé peninsula and the Maritimes as well as the Trans Canada and the Trans Gaspé highways.

It is also to be noted that it is quite free of access and that the depth of the river up to Gros-Cacouna allows the movement of ships of any tonnage. Towards the hinterland, whether it be Quebec or Montreal, the channel gets narrower, which makes navigation more difficult, specially in winter, since in some parts it is only 27 feet deep.

More and more, ships drawing 40, 50 or 60 feet of water are being built and such ships will never be able to anchor anywhere in the river with the exception of Sept-Îles, Port-Cartier and Gros-Cacouna. On the other hand, we must remember that according to the 1965 edition of *Ports of the World*, there are only about ten sea ports in the world where ships drawing more than 30 feet of water can drop anchor.

In 1964, 6.4 million tons out of the 10.1 million tons of freight shipped abroad, have been shipped to countries where ports are more than 39 feet deep. It would be possible to establish a regular service between Gros-Cacouna and these harbours. Here is what can be read at page 115 of the Sorès report:

The rapid increase in the number of huge ships and the trends in the composition of the world ore ship fleet show a noticeable increase in this category (fig. 19, page 114).

In eastern Canada, presently, three ports only can receive tankers (page 55, fig. 5).

And I refer again to the Sorès report:

—They are Halifax, Havre Saint-Pierre and Port-Cartier.

In other words, 54 per cent of the ships presently in operation cannot enter the harbours of eastern Canada. With a depth of 40 feet 60,000 ton vessels

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can be accommodated. With 50 feet of water, a harbour can handle almost any type of ships under 100,000 tons.

Equipped with a mooring station, Gros-Cacouna harbour could accommodate the largest tankers now in use (around 200,000 tons).

The construction of ships is becoming more and more specialized. For instance, lakers are being built which are able to sail through locks and are designed to navigate on inland seas. Moreover, 200,000 ton ocean liners are also being built but they cannot sail through canals and inland seas and their access to sea ports is limited to about ten in the world, and this enables such ports, mainly in the case of bulk merchandise such as grain, oil, chemical fertilizers, ore to meet certain specific needs.

Subsection 9.4.6, at page 233 of the Sorès report, reads as follows, and I quote:

Possibility for Gros-Cacouna of becoming a container terminal.

This study indicates that potential container traffic is quite promising for that port; on the other hand, the setting up of such a terminal on the St. Lawrence, east of Montreal, is quite likely in a few years; the choice of the Gros-Cacouna port at first sight seems therefore quite possible. Indeed, there is plenty of space—which is quite important for such a use—the port is easily accessible all year round and finally the existing communication network—railways and roads—puts this port scarcely a few hours away from Montreal.

For example, we could quite well see a laker loaded with grain discharge its shipment in the grain elevators at Gros-Cacouna and return to its point of departure with an ore shipment. We could also see an oceanic with an oil shipment go back loaded with grain. We could give a hundred examples, but it is important to remember that this transit operation would immediately entail considerable development and would create some employment and enable the setting up of oil refineries, grain elevators, plants for smelting and other similar operations as well as plants for the production of chemical fertilizers, liquid ground wood pulp, potato-flour, and all kinds of warehouses.

Gros-Cacouna can therefore be considered as one of the best developed ports for the shipping trade, provided, of course, it is equipped with the most modern devices, provided with barges and with all the facilities required to meet international competition. Either Quebec will develop that sea-