

*Seaway and Canal Tolls*

the evidence that was placed before the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority in its recent hearings. Perhaps some hon. members who have spoken today have had the benefit of reading some of the briefs that were presented, but I personally have not. I think we should wait until we hear the report of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, and when it has made its recommendations to the cabinet I am sure the government will act in the best interests of all Canada, and that includes the wheat growers of western Canada.

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, the one remarkable statement I heard from the hon. member for Kootenay East (Mr. Byrne) was his expression of the high regard which the Liberal party had for the farmers of western Canada. I say that the good people of Canada should pause once in a while to see how fortunate it was for Canada that the farmers of western Canada do not have the same regard for the Liberal party. Today has been a pretty good illustration of that.

While this issue involves far more than the western farmers—and it does affect them intimately—we have had an illustration of member after member from the west rising, and with golden words of wisdom which, looking at the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Turner) I am afraid fell on stony ears, indicating the reasons why this proposed increase in tolls should not be put into effect.

The hon. member for Kootenay East said something about there being no member from western Canada in the chamber at one time. As one member from western Canada I should like to say I was attending the public accounts committee to salvage something out of the pitiful mess of overpayments, extravagance and waste flowing from the actions of the government. Now I come back to this chamber and find that our efforts are going to waste because the Minister without Portfolio, on behalf of the government, is going to impose this additional sum of money on the overburdened taxpayers of the country, either directly or indirectly.

**Mr. Turner:** That is not what I said at all.

● (9:50 p.m.)

**Mr. Baldwin:** I consider it is significant that the hon. member who just sat down did not in one sentence, if I heard him correctly—and we will look to see whether we can glean some golden nuggets tomorrow—indicates in any way his support for the position

[Mr. Byrne.]

taken by the Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Turner). There stands the minister like Horatio at the bridge, only for a very much worse cause. He is the only man who has seen fit to stand up and support this nefarious program of increased tolls. I say to the minister, after listening to what has been said on this side, that if he had tears surely he would be prepared to shed them now, but I doubt after the long list of errors, accidents and mistakes which have come from the government over there that he has any tears left.

In dealing with the issue for one moment, I should like to say that I would not have spoken at all had I looked across at the minister and seen some capability of bending or some indication that he is prepared to accede to these very reasonable requests. As I read the St. Lawrence seaway legislation I find it is very vague and ambiguous to some extent; but when the minister suggested earlier this afternoon that there might have been or could have been access to the Board of Transport Commissioners, I suggest this is entirely wrong. As it stands now, if under section 17 the tolls are imposed by the Canadian government acting through the seaway authority in conjunction with the government of the United States, through its corporate emanation, sections 15 and 16 have no application at all, and so far as the tolls established with regard to the deep water construction are concerned there is no opportunity for the Board of Transport Commissioners to function. But if they did function with regard to other tolls which were set, it would not be by way of hearing and appeal.

I may have misunderstood the minister, but in discussing what was said in 1958 by Mr. Chevrier at the time the announcement was made by the minister of transport, he made the suggestion that Mr. Chevrier had indicated this. I say this is not the case. Even if it were, all that the Board of Transport Commissioners can do is to consider the question of discrimination. The question of discrimination as applied to the Board of Transport Commissioners has had a long history. The board cannot consider the economic consequences but, as between two individuals or two corporations whose goods are being carried by this particular carrier, it can come to a decision in respect of whether or not there has been discrimination.

I think it is quite wrong to suggest that any time, under the legislation which was