

*Supply—Transport*

the last floating mines were found in the coastal waters off eastern Canada?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I do not know, Mr. Chairman, but there are quite a few floating around here sometimes.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I thought that the minister's last observation to me was very appealing but why did it become necessary only in 1960 to extend this to Canadian government vessels? It seems very late in the day to be giving a protection to Canadian government vessels that was previously given to others. If they have gone without protection for all these years why was it suddenly necessary in the further supplementary estimates?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I think I have already dealt with that. This practice is not confined to this year. As a matter of fact it goes back, I am told, to the time of our predecessors in office. The treasury board thought it was high time this matter was brought before parliament for approval.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Does the minister mean to say it has been done illegally for the last three years? Is that what the minister is telling us now?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Did the hon. gentlemen say for the last three years? I am told that the practice went on before that. I will not say it was done illegally but there was just enough doubt about it to make it desirable in the view of the treasury board that this matter should be brought to the committee.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** There is no new practice if I understand the minister correctly but just a change in language to make sure that every kind of vessel is covered?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Just to remove any question about the practice that has been followed, to make it quite clear that government ships are included within the scope of the authorization.

**Mr. Hellyer:** Could the minister tell us who does this degaussing process? Is it done by some branch of the government service or by a private company?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I indicated the direction under which the work is carried on, Mr. Chairman. As I understand it it is a service of the Department of Transport.

**Mr. Hellyer:** The minister feels it is done by officials of the Department of Transport itself?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Yes, but the work is supervised by technical officers of the Department of National Defence, the navy.

I mentioned earlier the committee that is composed of representatives of the Canadian maritime commission, the Department of Transport and the Department of National Defence.

Item agreed to.

696. Maritime Freight Rates Act—Payment to the railway companies operating in the select territory designated by the act, of the difference occurring on account of the application of the act, between the tariff tolls and normal tolls under approved tariffs (estimated and certified to the Minister of Transport by the Canadian National Railway Company and approved by auditors of the said company respecting the eastern lines of the Canadian National Railways and in the case of the other railways by the board of transport commissioners for Canada) on all traffic moved during the calendar year 1959—further amount required, \$179,500.

**Mr. Robichaud:** Mr. Chairman, could the minister give some information to the committee in view of the reports which have been made by the maritime transportation commission as to whether the government is giving consideration to extending the roll-back beyond the expiry date of July 31?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** So far as the present item is concerned, obviously no extension is contemplated or is involved beyond that previously approved. This is simply the vote of an additional sum.

As to the question the hon. gentleman has asked, I think it would be more properly directed to my colleague the Minister of Transport on the main estimates for 1960-61.

**Mr. Chevrier:** Mr. Chairman, this is the usual item which is voted in the main estimates and the addition in these further supplementaries to cover the difference between the tariff tolls and the normal tolls in the select territory. The question that comes to my mind now is this. The minister will remember that a statement was made in the house that there would be no increase in freight rates for a period of one year. I believe that statement was made both by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Transport in the course of a debate relating to a reduction under the freight rates act and also in answer to a question on the orders of the day which I believe was directed to the Prime Minister.

The year expires pretty soon and I am wondering if the minister is in a position to tell the committee whether we can expect a statement either by the Prime Minister or the Minister of Transport as to whether or not there is going to be an increase allowed. By that I mean, will the railways be allowed to file their applications with the board of transport commissioners for an increase in freight rates? As the minister knows, the Canadian National Railways already filed an