

Supply—Transport

the representations I have made as the member for Cumberland on behalf of the municipality of Cumberland, which has passed resolutions, and on behalf of certain citizens who are uneasy about the closing of these stations. As I understand the situation, no hearing has yet been held and no decision has been reached. I want to point out very strongly to the minister and the committee that the people of Nova Scotia have rights so far as keeping these railway stations open is concerned. The railway must not be allowed to close the stations merely because a few dollars may be saved. I put the responsibility on the minister and the government.

Last year the taxpayers of Canada made up a deficit of Canadian National Railways of over \$15 million, and since that is so we in Nova Scotia have prior rights with respect to the privileges we have had for so many years. Then there is the necessity of double-tracking the Canadian National railway line from Moncton to Truro and through to Sydney, especially the line from Truro to Sydney. That matter was discussed in the special committee on railways and shipping but there was no very sympathetic response from the officials of Canadian National Railways.

I want to make a short reference to the canal situation. Almost \$400 million has been spent in central Canada on canals. In the minister's estimates this year there is a total appropriation of \$9,793,793 for the maintenance of these canals. Practically no money will be expended for that purpose in the maritime provinces. The house has agreed to an expenditure of \$300 million on the St. Lawrence seaway. There is an appropriation in the minister's estimates of \$12,541,000 for improvements to the St. Lawrence channel. Last session the minister submitted figures as to what had been expended up to date on dredging the St. Lawrence channel. I have not the figures before me but up to date it has amounted to a very large sum.

Then there is the proposal to build the Chignecto canal which I have put before the house repeatedly. Strong, determined delegations have come to Ottawa asking that that work be undertaken as was promised at the time of confederation and on many occasions since. While the minister is always very genial and courteous, I do not think he has given serious thought to the granting of the request of the people interested in that project. The hon. member for Westmorland had the honour and responsibility of moving the address in reply to the speech from the throne at the opening of this session. He was requested to do so by the Prime Minister and the government. He put forward a proposal for the construction

of this canal but at another location, namely, from the Petitcodiac river through to Shediac.

He made a proposal for the building of a large tidal power plant at the head of the bay of Fundy, the Cumberland basin and the Petitcodiac river. He has put this proposal before the house on different occasions. He has had a sympathetic response from the Minister of Resources and Development but as far as I know nothing has been done. There has merely been a vague promise that sympathetic consideration would be given to the suggestion. I do not think that is quite good enough. When a member acting on behalf of the Prime Minister and the government makes such proposals time after time to the house I think we should have a statement from the minister as to what he proposes to do with respect to the building of the Chignecto canal and the development of the two million horsepower project at the head of the bay of Fundy.

There have been references to airports and air services. In the minister's estimates there is a total amount of \$42,051,165 for air services. In the estimates of the Department of National Defence there is a total appropriation of \$759,310,300 for air services. I suppose the town of Amherst made a greater effort and contribution than any other municipality in Canada during the last war in co-operating with the government in the building of an airport. When the war was over the government refused even to maintain the Amherst airport. They threw it to one side just as they would a squeezed orange or an old shoe. That airport, like airports in other parts of Canada, is of great value to the air services of Canada. There was a gathering there only a few weeks ago. While the airport was in very bad condition planes landed and a number of people had a conference there with respect to the development of air services. I understand that after great effort the minister induced the town of Amherst to take over the airport inasmuch as the government refused even to maintain it. It is intolerable that such an airport, one of the best of its kind in all Canada, should be allowed to fall into disrepair because of a few thousand dollars a year. This department is spending this large sum; the air force under the Department of National Defence is spending \$759 million this year; yet there is not money available to keep that airport in repair.

There are other subjects I should like to deal with under this department. The trans-Canada highway does not come under the minister, but the grade crossings do. I would ask if, in connection with the agreement with Nova Scotia, arrangements are being made to