

Seaway and Canal Tolls

not debate this matter now, and should not debate it then, all add up to ways and means of preventing parliament speaking on this issue at a time when it may have some effect. The urgency of debate is that we should be given an opportunity to express our views at a time when their expression might have an influence.

The suggestion that this matter might be discussed when the estimates of the Department of Transport are before a certain committee is no guarantee that that will actually happen. I can see a member trying to raise this question on the estimates of the Department of Transport, and I can see an ingenious chairman saying that there is not an item in the estimates specifically relating to this, so that members seeking to raise this issue would find themselves out of court. I agree with those who have spoken from each of the parties on this side of the house that there is urgency of debate on this issue at this time, and I hope Your Honour will so find.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to indicate to hon. members that after listening to both sides of the house I am now in a position to reach a decision on the motion submitted by the hon. member for Kindersley. There is, of course, merit in the proposition advanced by the Minister of Public Works to the effect that this matter might be considered by the appropriate committee dealing with the estimates of the Department of Transport, but to my mind this does not meet the situation entirely.

I believe a strong point has been made by the hon. member for Kindersley, supported by other hon. members; and, as a few hon. members have said, if standing order 26 is ever going to be used, if there is any time when it is to provide an opportunity to members to adjourn the proceedings of the house to consider a matter which in the opinion of a large number of members is of urgent importance and should be debated, then I believe this is the type of situation, and I would allow the hon. member to proceed.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Cantelon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Cantelon asks for leave to move the adjournment of the house under standing order 26 to discuss a definite matter

of urgent public importance. Is it the pleasure of the house that the hon. member shall have leave to proceed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Cantelon: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the sense of justice which has led to your acceptance of this motion.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member knows he cannot comment on a decision of the Chair.

Mr. Cantelon: On February 10 and again on May 20 I had some comments to make on this particular matter. I said that the western Canadian sees the great lakes waterway as his doorway to the sea. I want to emphasize that point very strongly. This is indeed the way in which he looks upon the St. Lawrence seaway. It is true that he now moves a lot of goods through the Pacific ports, and some through Churchill, but he still thinks of the St. Lawrence seaway as the main route. So he is very concerned when he is faced with any thought that there are liable to be increases in the costs of what he ships and what he buys.

When Canada was being created throughout the nineteenth century the development of the St. Lawrence waterway system was undoubtedly one of the most important factors to tie the west to the rest of Canada. Cheap transportation through this system made it possible for western Canadians to market their grain at competitive prices on the world market. Also because of it, central Canada was able to ship its manufactured products to the west at cheap rates to meet the growing needs of that area of this great country. I question very much whether the prosperity that is so much in evidence now would be in existence without that waterway.

It is questionable whether the rapid development of the west which took place in the 1890's and the early 1900's which raised the population of the prairie provinces from something like 419,000 in 1901 to 1,328,000 in 1911, could ever have happened without the waterway. The western Canadian is not liable to forget this. Many people went to western Canada because of that waterway. They know the effect it has had on their development and the effect they hope it will have on their future.