

*Navigable Waters Protection Act*

its purpose at all. The purpose of this legislation is to try to prevent the commission of crimes rather than to prosecute and imprison people for committing them.

I do not claim to be an authority on Canadian shipping or commerce; but with all due respect to the Leader of the Opposition I would certainly put my opinion on at least a parity with his on these subjects. The Leader of the Opposition asked a series of rhetorical questions as to whether the blowing up of the Welland canal or the Sault Ste. Marie canal would constitute a greater offence than the blowing up of a ship in Hudson bay. I should say the first offence would inflict incalculably greater damage to Canada than the latter. He then asked would it not be a greater offence to blow up a ship travelling between Vancouver and Victoria, and he listed a number of other coastwise examples dealing with the trade in bauxite coming into lake St. John through the lower St. Lawrence river.

But surely the whole point of this matter is that we have in Canada, whether the Leader of the Opposition is aware of it or not, a great lakes canal system through which an enormous amount of shipping passes. I believe there is no greater canal traffic in the world, and if I am not mistaken the next two greatest canals in the world do not together carry a greater volume of traffic. The answer therefore to all these rhetorical questions posed by the Leader of the Opposition is "Yes, it certainly would constitute very much greater damage to the economic life of Canada to have sabotage committed on the great lakes canal system covered by this bill than to have it occur elsewhere in Canada". That is the whole point. I am glad my hon. friend asked that long series of rhetorical questions in order that that point may be cleared up.

**Mr. Drew:** How do you keep out the foreign ships?

**Mr. Garson:** With regard to the foreign ships, as I said before I do not pretend to be an expert on this matter, but I think perhaps upon reflection my hon. friend will agree that one of the purposes for constructing the seaway we have been discussing at such great length is to make it possible to get a larger number of foreign cargo ships up into the great lakes; for most of the seafaring ships that come up the St. Lawrence river are of too deep a draught to travel up the seaway from tidewater to the lower end of lake Ontario. I will grant that there are some foreign ships which come up, but when my hon. friend is discussing a matter

[Mr. Garson.]

of this kind he should attempt to discuss it in proportion, and I do not think there is a single instance my hon. friend gave in all his rhetorical questions where the damage from sabotage would be anywhere near comparable to that which could occur in the canals of the great lakes system.

The hon. member for Nanaimo said that this idea is fatuous. I must say in all candour that I do not pretend to be any greater an authority upon this particular subject than the Leader of the Opposition or even the hon. member for Nanaimo. Perhaps the latter is a better authority on sabotage than I am; I do not know; but I would submit that those people whose opinions carry some weight in this matter do not agree with the views of the hon. member for Nanaimo, and I will leave it at that.

But I think if we reflect upon this matter at all we must realize that if we had an aerial invasion of Canada—and I ask this question of the Leader of the Opposition—would not the Welland canal be one of the main objectives of that aerial invasion? There is no part of the economic traffic of Canada the dislocation of which would cause greater harm to our economic life than the putting out of operation of the great lakes system. That is the point of this piece of legislation.

What we have done is not to create a supplementary Criminal Code but merely to provide an administrative method of trying to prevent what is in our power to prevent. In this connection I never said anything about dangerous men in the way in which the Leader of the Opposition has attributed that phrase to me. All I said was that those who, upon reasonable grounds, are suspected of being potential saboteurs, and there are not very many of them, should be covered under the provisions of this bill.

Surely when we have passed an order in council, have tabled it in the house, where it has been ever since, and when we now propose to renew it under the terms of this present legislation, then no matter how prejudiced the hon. members of the opposition may be, they should at least take our word for it as to what we intend to do under the legislation which is now before the house.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has pointed out that there is nothing defined here and that he does not know what we are going to do under this general power but pass an order in council. That is quite true. But what we are saying to my hon. friend now is that the proposal is to renew the present order in council for the purpose which it has served in the past few years.