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Plans for Development of Port of Vancouver

Plans for Development of Port of Vancouver—Policy of Dominion Government to Give This Terminal Port Adequate Facilities for Handling of Shipping.

Half a century of port development is to be crowded into a few years for Vancouver. Such was, in effect, the promise of Hon. C. C. Ballantyne, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, in his discussions with business delegations during his recent visit to the Coast. His more definite declarations indicate a big car ferry across Burrard Inlet, for the speedy and efficient handling of freight, the construction of a lumber assembly wharf, the building of another pier similar to the Ballantyne pier, upon which construction work has commenced, a terminal railway and the establishment of a transpacific passenger and freight service.

While the Minister was not in a position to make specific promises, he intimated that all these improvements were planned for the port and would be furnished as rapidly as funds became available. At the next session of Parliament, he declared, he would ask for another appropriation of \$5,000,000 with which to develop the progressive scheme which Mr. A. D. Swan, the Government's harbor expert, had evolved for the city. The Minister did not deem it advisable to make public the total sum which it was considered necessary to expend to make Vancouver one of the leading ports of the world, but did convey the impression intentionally that the two votes of \$5,000,000 each would have to be repeated before the ultimate plans had been completed.

In a frank, business-like way, the Minister told Vancouver's business interests that they must co-operate willingly, or the destiny of the port would not be fulfilled. He explained that in advancing the millions to Vancouver, through its harbor commission, the Government was not making donations. It was a business proposition, and interest at the rate of 5½ per cent must be paid on the sums advanced. The business of the port must finance the undertakings. That such co-operation and assistance as could be given by the commercial interests of the locality would be willingly tendered, was the promise made to the Minister by President W. J. Blake Wilson, of the Board of

Trade.

The cordial manner, absence of formality and evident appreciation of the requirements of the port, together with the business-like way in which Hon. Mr. Ballantyne discussed harbor matters with the delegation which met him, convinced all who listened to him that Vancouver has a powerful friend. The Minister's long experience as a member of the board of harbor commissioners of the Port of Montreal permitted him to speak with authority on matters of harbor development.

"I never tell a delegation, if I can possibly help it, that I will take questions under advisement and give them my careful consideration," he said to the Board of Trade delegation which waited upon him, "I believe you are business men, and want a business-like answer."

The delegation addressed him on the matter of harbor charges, pointing out that tonnage taxes and cargo charges made the port of Vancouver compare unfavorably with other competitive ports. To this he replied that he did not favor tonnage dues. "There should be no charge on the ship. The charges should be on the cargoes, and I hope that this is the last year that Vancouver will charge tonnage rate," he stated, and continuing, gave as his opinion that the revenues should be derived from cargo or wharfage charges, and possibly a small fee collected for berthing privileges.

In discussing the future of the port, Hon. Mr. Ballantyne said, "I was surprised at your lack of facilities on your waterfront. It is surprising that

you have carried on business of such volume as you have under these handicaps. Your port equipment is twenty-five years behind the times. You lack proper accommodation, you have no up-to-date cranes or derricks. Your sheds are out of date and the only modern pier and equipment you have on the harbor are found at the Government dock and elevator."

One thing that struck the Minister forcibly was the absence of booming grounds and a lumber assembly wharf. He declared that in his opinion a port from which such a volume of trade was conducted in timber should have an assembly wharf furnished with modern equipment. He

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