

trade produces. As a matter of fact it is only during the last four or five years there has been any surplus. For a number of years there was not a surplus but a deficit.

Mr. CAMPBELL: These new elevators at Halifax and Prince Rupert are really built by the farmers. The money is paid by the government but charged up to the farmers. I doubt whether very much grain will pass through these elevators, yet the overhead cost must be borne by the farmers.

Mr. STEVENS: I had no intention of raising the question of what Canada was doing for the farmers, and my hon. friend from Saltecoats (Mr. Sales) rather took me up a little rapidly there. I was not speaking with any ulterior motive at all, but now that he has precipitated a discussion, we might as well examine it. The facts are that Moose Jaw in 1923-24 had a revenue of \$24,000 and an expenditure of \$57,000, a very heavy deficit on bare operation, without any charge for overhead at all; that is for interest on capital. I do not know just what the Moose Jaw elevator cost the country, but it was certainly a very large sum. Then we have Saskatoon with a revenue of \$41,000 and an expenditure of \$62,000. There again is a very heavy deficit being borne by the consolidated fund, and no charge for interest on the capital expenditure. Edmonton is not a fair comparison because it was the first year in operation, and only a portion of the year is disclosed; there we have a similar case, but we cannot judge by it. In Calgary there is a revenue of \$98,000 as against an expenditure of \$71,000. In this case we see an indication that it is an investment which is capable of bringing in a fair return. When I say a fair return, I mean paying a part of the interest on the capital charge. When we come to Port Arthur we find that undoubtedly the earnings of the elevator will carry the capital charges—that is the interest on the capital. But that is the only case which gives any evidence of doing so. I am not, nor did I intend until my hon. friend became a little piqued regarding the situation—

Mr. SALES: Not at all.

Mr. STEVENS: I did not intend to criticize this system or policy of placing large terminal elevators, or what we call interior elevators, for the promotion and assisting in the handling of the grain of Canada. I think it is quite proper for parliament to do it, but it is just as well for parliament and my hon. friends to my left to realize that parliament is doing the job, and doing it in a

[Mr. Low.]

very generous manner I think; and the point which I think the minister or the Board of Grain Commissioners might take into consideration is whether these two great elevators at Moose Jaw and Saskatoon cannot be used to greater capacity, so as to show a smaller loss at least than that which is disclosed in these figures.

Mr. SPENCER: Has my hon. friend the figures for Port Arthur?

Mr. STEVENS: Yes. The earnings at Port Arthur were \$398,000 and the disbursements \$151,000, showing an earning sufficient to pay a moderate interest on the capital investment. That I think is a very creditable showing.

As to the question of fees, I am very strong in regard to keeping the charges for the handling, not only in these elevators, but in all elevators, as low as it is possible to keep them. Let the charges be kept at the very lowest point. I desire to say to the minister just here—it does not come properly under his department, although it did a short time ago—that at Vancouver this year the harbour commissioners have insured the elevator and other works, entailing an expenditure of over \$30,000 in insurance premiums. That must mean an increase in the charges of the port and I deprecate it very much. I think it is wholly unnecessary, because the government does not insure all of these elevators. So that in the case of these elevators which we have before us, and the elevator at Vancouver, which is constructed of reinforced concrete, and fireproof just the same as the others, there is no more need of insurance now than when it was under the Board of Grain Commissioners.

Mr. LOW: Are all the elevators at Vancouver fireproof?

Mr. STEVENS: Yes, all except one, that unfortunate so-called Woodward elevator No. 3, which is being frightfully distorted by some new expensive works that are being added to it at present in a hopeless fashion I believe. Outside of that they are all fireproof and of up-to-date construction. But what I am coming to is this: every effort should be made to keep the charges and fees at the lowest possible point, and I would like the minister to direct the Board of Grain Commissioners to give consideration to the rates charged in Vancouver. They raised them, I think, half a cent during the past year, or perhaps a little more than a year ago. I do not see any need for that increase in the Vancouver elevator fees. The insurance