

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): This is a lump reduction brought about by the fact that it is proposed this year to operate only one dredge instead of two. It was thought that the reduction could well be made.

Mr. BOWMAN: Will the minister tell me whether, in view of the amount set aside, it is the purpose of the government to operate the dredge Winnipegosis on lake Winnipegosis?

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): The appropriation will not permit the operation of that dredge.

Mr. BOWMAN: May I point out that the cutting off of this dredge would be a very serious matter to a large community. The dredge Winnipegosis has been operating on the lake of that name as far back as I can remember. I came to Dauphin constituency about twenty-three years ago, and during all that time, and perhaps for several years previously, the dredge has been operated. Some members have spoken about the lakes and streams in western Canada. Lake Winnipegosis is very large, and stands in size next to the great lakes, Great Bear lake, Great Slave lake and lake Winnipeg. Its area is about 2,000 square miles. A very considerable amount of business in the way of fishing, lumbering, and so on, is carried on on the lake. At its south end there is the village of Winnipegosis, with a population, according to the last census, of 976 people, which constitute the trade centre of the lake. The dredge Winnipegosis has for many years kept the harbour at Winnipegosis open. The village is situated at the mouth of the Mossy river on lake Winnipegosis, and at that point there is a harbour for the boats plying up and down the lake. During the last few years at low water periods it has been necessary to dig a channel out into the lake for a distance of about a mile. That is the only way in which the boats engaged in the fishing business can enter the harbour. Hon. members will readily appreciate that if the dredge Winnipegosis is not allowed to operate during the coming summer the effect upon the community will be serious. As hon. members know, during the last few years there has been very little moisture in western Canada, and in most of our lakes, even in a large lake such as lake Winnipegosis, the water is extremely low; I am told that at the present time it is three or four feet lower than it is under normal conditions. About a year ago, in the winter of 1931-32, the department spent a considerable sum of money blasting out the bottom of the Mossy river so that the boats might enter the harbour—under the conditions obtaining before that, they had been unable to enter in

safety. The dredge has been operating in the channel to which I have referred, and its operations extend practically throughout the whole season because the high winds keep filling the channel, necessitating dredging operations throughout the whole summer.

In this connection I shall read a letter received from the mayor of the village of Winnipegosis. Under date of February 15, 1933, and addressed to myself, it reads as follows:

I thank you for your letter regarding dredging operations on lake Winnipegosis.

There is no doubt whatsoever but that the channel from the village wharves to deep water in the lake is much too shallow for safe navigation. Unless dredging is done this summer to clean out the entire length of channel, which is a good mile in length, our steamboats at present in the harbour will not be able to get on to the lake for navigation purposes. We had difficulty last fall in navigating, especially in periods of low water resulting from south winds, so much so that as a result of touching bottom the Armstrong Company's ss. Armenon is now on dry dock for repairs as she damaged her stern bearing to such an extent that it required replacement. She also requires renewing of a portion of her keel which was worn down through scraping bottom.

This work is of paramount importance to this community as without a channel to the lake proper all works will be tied up. There are other works required at various portions of the lake, a list of which Mr. Goodspeed, chief engineer has, including work at two lumber mills on the lake and one channel.

In support of having this work done I would point out that the existence of the village of Winnipegosis rests practically entirely on the products coming in from lake points. There are two lumber mills and two box factories on the lake which bring their production into Winnipegosis. Combined I would estimate that they will produce this year about 250,000 feet of lumber. Our principal industry centres in the fish business, and on account of low water last year it was impossible for the Booth Fisheries Company to operate their tug.

May I add that the summer fishing is carried on about 110 miles up the lake, and it is necessary that the fish be brought down by steamboat and barge. For that purpose there has to be a channel of fair depth, and a good harbour at Winnipegosis in order that these boats may ply their trade and the business be carried on. The letter continues:

This resulted in curtailment of operations in the district, but should conditions be such that the Armstrong Fisheries tug is tied up on account of low water, stagnation will result locally. With an improved channel we anticipate that fish production will be increased this fall, but unless this work is done there is every likelihood that fishing operations will be greatly curtailed, which as you can appreciate will hit this locality very hard.

I feel very decidedly that this work should be done and that the dredge should operate.