

Supply—Transport

I repeat the word "alone".

—among all the harbours on the Atlantic and the St. Maurice, has managed to achieve a net operating surplus.

In fact the last official report published by the national harbours board in 1953 supplies the following details:

Harbour	Deficit	Surplus
Halifax	\$ 8,201,444.07	
Saint John (N.B.)	9,278,467.04	
Chicoutimi	2,819,897.84	
Quebec	27,060,829.33	
Three Rivers		\$836,586.81 ^(a)
Montreal	9,282,276.24	

^(a) A downward adjustment of the surplus of \$2,578,613.76 in 1952 has affected the accumulated surplus.

And during that time, namely—

From 1936 to 1953, the national harbours board has invested for capital improvements in the Three Rivers harbour the sum of \$594,058.

Most of which was spent two years ago for the construction of a shed.

An analysis of capital expenditures in certain harbours of Canada (Table II) for purposes of comparison for the years 1936 to 1953 is attached hereto.

It should be noted that in the harbours of Halifax, Saint John, Chicoutimi and Quebec the national harbours board has spent for capital improvements \$6,692,991, \$9,820,529, \$68,492, \$3,942,457 respectively, against \$594,058 for Three Rivers, the only harbour showing a surplus.

A few days ago, in a dispatch from Ottawa, the Canadian Press announced the 1956 budget of the national harbours board. As far as Three Rivers is concerned, we read to our great disappointment that the national harbours board was not at all concerned with Three Rivers harbour and that it would continue in 1956 to treat it with its usual niggardliness.

Let me quote the figures stated by the Canadian press:

Amounts budgeted for the various harbours under the jurisdiction of the board are as follows:

Montreal	\$12,736,500
Halifax	1,942,000
Quebec	1,687,000
Saint John (N.B.)	845,000
Vancouver	649,000
Other ports	200,000
Port Colborne	80,000
Prescott	40,000

And finally, Three Rivers is put down here for \$35,000 and yet it is the only port which has returned a profit.

I should think, Mr. Chairman, that these figures clearly show that the national harbours board is not being fair in its dealing with Three Rivers harbour. This is a ridiculous situation. Here we have the national

[Mr. Balcer.]

harbours board, making money out of Three Rivers harbour, seemingly unable to invest more than \$35,000 in it, whereas the Department of Public Works is spending unquestionably justified amounts of money on docks in very small harbours which bring in no revenue whatsoever to that department. Such is the case at Blanc-Sablon where it is spending \$150,000 on a dock extension, at Mechins where \$100,000 are being spent on the rebuilding of the dock.

Mr. Langlois (Gaspé): Are you opposed to those projects?

Mr. Balcer: Absolutely not; I am in favour of them; I only wish the amounts were larger and, at the same time, that as much be done for Three Rivers harbour.

Mr. Langlois (Gaspé): You had implied that those expenses were apparently not justified because there was no return on the investment.

Mr. Balcer: That is quite false and my hon. friend knows that this is not what I meant.

Mr. Langlois (Gaspé): It is what you said.

Mr. Balcer: I definitely did not say that. I am particularly happy of this opportunity—

Mr. Lesage: We have a good government.

Mr. Balcer: —to request that our harbour at Three Rivers be treated in the same way and that the national harbours board, which makes a profit out of Three Rivers harbour, take a good look at it and see for itself in how many ways the harbour could be improved, so as to allow it to keep its rank as one of the leading harbours in Canada, especially after the completion of the St. Lawrence seaway.

Mr. Marler: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Balcer: And the required improvements could be carried out at the same time.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Marler: I should like to ask a question of the hon. member since he intends to broach another subject. He spoke at length of the money spent at Three Rivers and on other harbours in Canada, but he has yet to point out a single improvement urgently required at Three Rivers harbour. Could he tell us what are those needs he has referred to.

Mr. Balcer: I thank the minister; I was just coming to that.

Mr. Marler: Good, I am away ahead of you.