

Supply—Transport

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): In 1959 operating revenues amounted to \$2,116,157; operating expenses totalled \$7,916,043; leaving a net deficit \$5,799,886.

Mr. Chevrier: Is the item now required exclusive or inclusive of that?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): It is inclusive. Part of this deficit was provided in earlier votes and this is the balance required.

Item agreed to.

693. Construction or acquisition of auto-ferry vessels and equipment—To extend the purposes of vote 415 of the main estimates, 1959-60, to include the vessel detailed in these estimates, \$1.

Mr. Pickersgill: This is another dollar item.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): This supplementary estimate is required to provide for expenses arising out of the installation of transverse propulsion equipment and water filtering system on the Newfoundland ferry vessel, the *William Carson*. This additional work costs \$167,415. There were funds available within the existing appropriation for transfer to cover the amount, but this item was brought before the committee for approval.

Item agreed to.

694. Yarmouth, Nova Scotia-Bar Harbor, Maine, U.S.A., ferry service—deficit 1959—further amount required, \$63,203.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Chairman, could the minister give us a quick break-down of the operation of this vessel?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): For the year 1959, the Yarmouth-Bar Harbor ferry service shows the following results: Operating revenues, \$1,166,454.02, total expenses \$1,360,656.88, showing a net deficit of \$194,202.86.

Item agreed to.

695. Degaussing Canadian-owned merchant ships of 1,000 gross tons and over, of Canadian registry, or of United Kingdom registry if subject to re-transfer to Canadian registry under special inter-governmental arrangement—To extend the purposes of vote 418 of the main estimates, 1959-60, to include Canadian government vessels, \$1.

Mr. McGee: Mr. Chairman, I am just wondering why there is apparently a threat from magnetic mines approximately 15 years following the cessation of hostilities?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, this item is a \$1 item, the purpose of which is simply to extend the scope of the purposes for which the house approved the original vote, item No. 418, in the main estimates. This extension is required to authorize an amendment by adding Canadian government vessels

[Mr. Chevrier.]

to the scope of the original item. In the current and previous fiscal years expenditures were made on account of installing these protective devices not only on merchant ships but on transport ships such as icebreakers, supply and rescue ships, and those of other government departments. This item is designed to give approval.

Mr. Pickersgill: That does not quite answer the hon. member.

Mr. McGee: As I found out from an exploration I conducted in the dictionary "degaussing" means a device to prevent magnetic mines exploding in the immediate area. Is that not correct?

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. member's question should be answered, sir.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, I have already indicated the purpose of the amendment. I have indicated the work that has been carried on and for which approval is sought. This work is supervised by technical officers of the Department of National Defence. The committee is comprised of representatives of the Canadian maritime commission, the Department of Transport and the Department of National Defence approve of the ships to be degaussed. This is to permit the extension of the service to government ships.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman, I am wondering what the chairman of the treasury board asks the department about when an item comes up. Could the minister take us into his confidence and tell us that?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, I would be more than pleased to take the hon. gentleman into my confidence on a great many things but the proceedings of the treasury board are, of course, secret, and I think it would not be proper for me to discuss what goes on in the treasury board in reporting here. I can assure him, however, that the purpose of the treasury board is to make very certain that the expenditures for which approval is sought are authorized, are necessary, and that the taxpayers are receiving full value for every dollar to be spent.

Mr. Pickersgill: Well, why is this necessary?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Because it is necessary in the interests of safe navigation. I am sure the hon. gentleman would not want government vessels to be exposed to hazards when modern science can contribute to the reduction of the hazards.

Mr. Hellyer: That is quite right, Mr. Chairman. Is the minister able to tell us when