

PREVENT FOREST FIRES---IT PAYS!

ELEVATOR DISCUSSION BRINGS OUT INTERESTING POINTS IN REGARD TO VIEWS OF MEMBERS.

(continued from page one)

because I have travelled over that country, motoring back and forth, and there is a country in there some three hundred odd miles in extent from Fort George west along the Grand Trunk Pacific on both sides of the line, which in itself would be sufficient to warrant this expenditure at Prince Rupert for an elevator. In the matter of grain shipments to the Orient, possibly hon. members have not been following the grain movement in that direction. Comparing shipments last year with this, you will find that last year there was shipped to the Orient 4,000,000 bushels; this year the latest figures that I have seen show a shipment of 15,000,000 bushels. In the Oriental trade alone Canada this year did almost as much business from the western provinces as it did the year before for both the United Kingdom and the Orient, which shows the tremendous opportunities for growth in that direction alone.

In the matter of pier construction, I happened to be in Prince Rupert last year and there I saw a magnificent pier constructed, with huge freight sheds, but no business; there was nothing doing. There is a pier there, I am quite satisfied, capable of serving an elevator such as will be constructed. I have no hesitation, knowing the country of northern British Columbia, and knowing the facilities that can easily be had in the port of Prince Rupert, in recommending to the House this vote of \$150,000.

Vancouver's handicap.

Mr. Brown: In regard to the present shipment of grain over the Canadian National Railway to Vancouver, last winter if I remember right, the Canadian National was suffering from a severe handicap in the matter of accommodation for its cars at that port. Is there any possibility of that handicap being overcome? There was a handicap of something like \$13 per car that the Canadian National was under at Vancouver.

Mr. King (Kootenay): The situation will be improved when the other area in the harbour is opened up.

Mr. Brown: In this matter of constructing elevators, I think sometimes we go on the wrong principle. I do not like to approve of the idea of building elevators simply because some town thinks it needs one. I do not approve of building an elevator at Halifax, for instance, simply because Halifax thinks it has a right to share in the grain trade. It is entirely in violation of all economic laws that such a thing should be done. Neither would I be in favour of building an elevator at Prince Rupert simply because Prince Rupert thinks it might benefit by the building of an elevator. I think in handling the grain trade we should try to direct that trade along the lines of least resistance, because if we continue to run in violation of economic laws, we are bound to have that reflected in the end upon those who produce the grain.

I would not, however, like to oppose the building of an elevator at Prince Rupert without further information than I have at present. I am quite prepared to believe that the grain trade in the west will in the end demand an outlet both at Prince Rupert and at Vancouver. The argument advanced that the rates are the same, however, does not make any impression upon my mind, for if the rates are the same it simply means the Canadian National Railways have to carry the grain that much greater distance, and thereby make that much less profit in carrying grain. There might be other considerations that would warrant the building of an elevator at Prince Rupert, and to those considerations I, for my part, would be prepared to give due weight, but I would like to be assured that it would be for the ultimate benefit, not simply of

Prince Rupert, but of the Canadian National system as a whole, and of the property which the Canadian National Railways have in that port. Only on that assurance would I see fit at the present time to support the building of an elevator at Prince Rupert. I believe that the present situation is being adequately met by the service that is being rendered through Vancouver, although it might very well be that ultimately it would be desirable to have the port of Prince Rupert developed.

Asks For Figures.

Mr. Ross (Kingston): I do not feel like saying a word either for or against the building of elevators, but not having been in the House all evening I would like to ask the minister if he has given the House any figures, or if he has any figures, as to the business done at Prince Rupert from the sea. We know there is quite a long pier there; I have seen it. But is the pier going to be made the reason for building an elevator, and when the elevator is built, will that be the reason for building a new railway into the Peace River country, and so on? If the minister has any figures in regard to the business done over this pier at Prince Rupert, I should like to have them.

Mr. Robb: I have no statistics as to the grain handled at Prince Rupert, because there is no accommodation there to handle grain. I think my colleague, the Minister of Public Works, gave the best reason why we should put a small elevator at Prince Rupert, namely that it will enable the settlers along both sides of the railway east of Prince Rupert to ship their grain through that port.

Mr. Ross (Kingston): I am not very much impressed by what has been said from the other side of the House, or by what has been said by my hon. friend from Cariboo on this side, because I know that when he gets through a vote for his post office, he would support a lot of money being spent at Prince Rupert. I would like to have some information, not in regard to the grain, because I know that it is not moving yet, but as to what traffic of any kind is being done at that port.

Mr. Robb: I regret I have not that information for my hon. friend.

Must Have Facilities.

Mr. Kellner: I would like to support this vote for an elevator at Prince Rupert. I am inclined to think that you will never encourage a trade route until you have provided facilities for carrying on the trade that will develop over that route. While we have not any grain trade at the present moment at Prince Rupert, it is only reasonable to suppose that we could not have any until we provide the elevator, for there is no way of carrying it on. I do not know that we would be justified at the present moment in building a large elevator at that port, but this is a very modest request, to say the least, and it has been our experience in the past that ordinary ships sailing between ports is our cheapest method of transportation. We have always found that when tramp steamers

have found it necessary to come in to take the peak load off, whether it is grain or other freight, the grain rates have gone up, and I believe that if you provide the necessary facilities for carrying the ordinary freight between ports, you will get lower rates on grain and other commodities. As far as I am concerned, I am entirely in accord with the proposal for putting in an elevator at Prince Rupert.

Mr. Tolmie: I have listened with a good deal of interest to the discussion of the possibilities of agricultural development in northern British Columbia, and I want to endorse most heartily what has been said in that regard. There is a large area of country up there which will become a considerable wealth producer just as soon as it is properly opened up, and has an exit for its products. As far as the Oriental trade is concerned it has hardly commenced; there are immense possibilities in connection with it. The port of Prince Rupert has a real advantage as far as shipments westward across the Pacific are concerned. We have too very large investments in Prince Rupert. We have a railway built to that port, and if we are going to let it remain idle and wait for good times we are never going to get anywhere. I am a thorough believer in the intelligent expenditure of money along such lines as will develop these investments so as to make them profitable instead of having a deficit from year to year. Under these circumstances I will support the building of this elevator.

Curb Vancouver.

Mr. Shaw: I favour the expenditure for this purpose. I think it is highly desirable that there should be a government elevator at Prince Rupert, not only because of the natural advantages at that port, but also because it will be some curb perhaps, on the activities of the Vancouver people who are in charge of the grain handling system there. It is not right that by reason of a monopoly people are able to take advantage of the farmers of western Canada. I do not look for much development along the Prince Rupert line for a great many years, but certainly an elevator at Prince Rupert will greatly advantage the farmers of western Canada and particularly those of the province of Alberta. While speaking on the subject of elevators I think there is another point in the province of Alberta which is in dire need of an elevator and that is the city of Lethbridge. I think the requirements of Lethbridge in that regard should not have been overlooked so long. The member for Lethbridge (Mr. Jellicoff) is fully aware of the situation, and I heartily agree with the demand for this elevator which he has presented to parliament for a number of years. With respect to this particular item I think the minister should give us some idea of what he proposes. He says he is going to build a small elevator, but surely no business organization would vote \$150,000 and afterwards develop their idea of what they proposed to do. Surely the minister can tell us the contemplated total expenditure, the capacity of the proposed elevator, and such other information as will enable us to form some idea as to the nature of the governments proposition. That must be within the knowledge of the minister. It surely does not require \$150,000 for the government's architects to draw the necessary plans.

500,000 Bushels.

Mr. Robb: I cannot state the exact cost until the plans have been drawn in their entirety. My hon. friend lives in a country where they build elevators. He knows that elevators are built so that they can be enlarged. I imagine the capacity of this elevator is not to exceed 500,000 bushels. My hon. friend has probably prepared contracts and doubtless knows that the cost of an elevator depends primarily upon the expenditure involved in building the foundations, the cost of getting stone and cement. It

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is estimated that these elevators can be built at around 40 cents a bushel. That is the yard stick you start with. But the expenditure depends primarily on the cost of the foundations.

Sir Henry Drayton: Your foundations should be cheap in that locality.

Mr. Robb: I imagine so.

Sir Henry Drayton: There is lots of rock there.

Mr. Robb: And then there is the cost of stone and cement for the building. We can therefore only give a rough estimate.

Mr. Gardiner: Under whose control will this elevator be placed when it is built? Will it be under the Board of Grain Commissioners or some Harbour Commissioners?

Mr. Robb: Well, the vote is asked by the department of Trade and Commerce and the Grain Commission are under that department.

Sir Henry Drayton: The minister of railways was asked the question as to whether Sir Henry Thornton had recommended this elevator. He gave us a lot of reasons why he ought to have recommended it but did not state that he had done so. Will my hon. friend kindly state whether he has done so or not?

Mr. Robb: I am sure that he will after all these arguments.

Mr. Graham: If my hon. friend will read Hansard tomorrow he will see that it is one of the first things I said.

Sir Henry Drayton: I am glad to hear it. I did not catch the statement at the time it was

made.

Mr. Gardiner: Will the minister undertake to say, before this vote is passed, that this elevator when built will not be under the control of any Harbour board or any such body as that?

Mr. Robb: My hon. friend will not expect me to give an undertaking of that kind. I do not know who is going to administer the department in five, ten or fifteen years from now. I am telling him that the vote is going through in connection with the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Grain Commission are under that department. For the moment therefore, the matter has to do with the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Grain Commission. I cannot give any undertaking for the future.

Advantage Farmers.

Mr. Gardiner: I appreciate the position the minister is in with regard to the future, but I think the government before long will have to adopt a policy of a more or less permanent character in the matter of the control of the government elevators throughout Canada. I think that possibly the building of this elevator may be of some very great advantage to the farmers of western Canada. I do not know that it is quite necessary to put it up at present but the time is very close when it will be required. The minister and the government, of course, must realize the important fact that the moment this elevator is placed in Prince Rupert the set-

(Continued on page six)

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