

Supply—Transport

There is another matter which I have mentioned on several occasions in the house, the Arrow lakes steamship service. I think by this time the minister knows where the Arrow lakes are. It is most necessary that this steamer service be continued during the transition period. I suggest that the provincial government has some responsibility and that this steamer service should be kept operating as a result of financial co-operation between the provincial and federal governments.

As I have said before, if the Canadian Pacific Railway would only advertise the beauty of the route over which these steamers sail I am sure that they would be loaded to capacity during the summer months and well into the fall. The steamer operating on the Arrow lakes is called the *Minto* and the one operating on the Kootenay lake is called the *Moya*. I understand that these vessels were built in 1898 and they are two of a rapidly dwindling fleet of stern-wheelers and I am sure many people would be interested in the romantic experience of sailing on these ships. I bring this matter again to the minister's attention because it is most important with the developments that are going on at the present time that these steamers be kept running. I think that there should be co-operation between the provincial and federal government in connection with this steamer operation until the needs of the area are met by some other means of transportation. That is all I have to say this evening and I trust I have impressed the minister.

Mr. Black (Cumberland): Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to take up much of the time of the committee, but I should like to discuss one matter which is of great interest to my part of the country. It has been agreed that the minister should make a general statement, then hon. members would bring up matters in which they are interested, and the minister would reply. In view of the many requests made by the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra and the interesting and constructive requests made by other members, I am sure that many will get lost before the minister replies. Personally I think the old practice was the best where one item was taken up at a time and disposed of.

Mr. McLure: We can still do that.

Mr. Black (Cumberland): The Department of Transport is a most important department having to do with transportation by land, sea and air. It is especially important to Nova Scotia and the maritimes. As I have said before, we would never have entered confederation if it had not been for the advantages we expected to receive by way

[Mr. Herridge.]

of improved transportation facilities. Herebefore the railroads have used a large percentage of the coal produced in Cumberland and Pictou counties, perhaps a greater percentage of the production than that of any other section of Canada. I brought this matter to the minister's attention when the motion to set up the committee on railways and shipping was before the house.

This matter was discussed in the committee by the president of the Canadian National Railways. I appreciate the effort made by the hon. member for Cape Breton South, but I am not satisfied with the replies of the president of the Canadian National Railways. I feel that it is the duty of the Minister of Transport and the government to see that the rights of the coal miners in Nova Scotia are not prejudiced by the increased use of oil to operate these locomotives. From the information I have received more diesel engines are being used in the maritime provinces than even in central Canada. It has reached such a state that diesel locomotives are being used to move coal from Springhill and other coal-mining sections in Nova Scotia to be used for industrial purposes in Nova Scotia. I appeal to the minister and the government to see that the rights of the coal miners in Nova Scotia are not prejudiced by the introduction of diesel locomotives, even though they mean a small saving.

The Canadian National Railways own many locomotives which could be used for years to come. These locomotives should be used in the maritime provinces. They should be operated as coal burning locomotives and diesel engines should not be used.

There is another matter that is creating some uneasiness in my part of Nova Scotia, and that is the threatened closing of some of the railway stations. From a purely economic standpoint there may be some slight saving to be made by closing these stations but I say it is a right of the people who live in these communities to have these stations. They have been open to them ever since the railway was constructed seventy or eighty years ago, and the management of the railway has no right to issue orders that these railway stations be closed. I know they have to get the permission of the board of transport commissioners but the matter should not be dealt with purely from the point of view of economy.

The people in my constituency and in Nova Scotia generally have had these rights ever since the construction of the Canadian National Railways years ago. I appreciate the response I have had from the minister to