

Supply—Transport

work. So I say that this is an important matter, and I sincerely hope that the minister will be able to give some consideration to the suggestion I have made.

I am not an expert on shipping. I do not know whether it is possible or feasible to work out the suggestion I have laid before you but it is being done in respect to incoming freight and I cannot see any reason why it cannot be reversed. I cannot see any reason why something cannot be worked out by these officials. I have every respect for the officials of the Canadian maritime commission, but I feel that if they had the advice of a man from the Atlantic coast they would be in a much better position to handle these matters which I have placed before you. I shall leave that question with the minister, and perhaps he will be good enough a little later on to indicate what policy he proposes to follow and also what remedy he has for the difficulties experienced by our shipping on the Atlantic coast.

Coupled with that matter is one that has already been raised on the floor of the house by the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra and also by others. It has to do with the merchant navy. I couple the two matters, Mr. Chairman, because I feel that the one is linked up with the other. A large number of these young members of the former merchant navy are walking our streets today because of shipping conditions in our part of the country. I feel that something should be done for those young men. Last December an order in council was passed. I refer to P.C. 5983. I think I am correct in the number. If not, the minister will know the one I mean. It had to do with vocational training. It will be recalled that there were two restrictions in that order in council, one dealing with the age—restricting the applicants to age thirty—and the other dealing with the deadline, June 30.

The information given to the committee last Friday evening by the Minister of Veterans Affairs was to the effect that there were 770 applications received, 118 were rejected as being over age—I wish the minister would remember that figure, 118—100 applications were withdrawn, 195 were rejected on various grounds, 40 were still in the process of consideration, and 317 were accepted for vocational training and the benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. But these young men come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transport and it is to that department that I put the plea that an amendment be made to this order in council by striking out the age limit of thirty. Large numbers of these young men were too young to enter the regular armed services. They were perhaps sixteen, seventeen, seventeen

and a half and under. We had a large number of them both on the east and west coasts. Then there were those who were too old. I do not know whether or not all the older ones care to take up vocational training but at least 118 are anxious to do so. These young men today, because of shipping conditions, are unemployed. From an educational standpoint I believe it would be well for the government to amend that order in council and to bring into effect a measure whereby they would be permitted to enjoy the benefits enjoyed by other members of the armed forces and to obtain vocational training. I hope I have made that point clear. I am asking the minister to remove both restrictions, the one applying to the age and the other applying to the deadline. If he does not wish to do away entirely with the deadline, I would suggest that he might be good enough to extend it to June 30, 1950, instead of having it as it now reads, namely, June 30, 1949.

I think I have covered, as briefly as I could, the points I had in mind, namely, what policy if any the government have and what remedy they propose with respect to our shipping conditions on the Atlantic coast; and in the second place, to give these young merchant navy men the opportunity to further their education by extending D.V.A. benefits so as to give them vocational training.

Mr. Robertson: I should like to bring to the attention of hon. members, and of the Minister of Transport in particular, a question which is of vital concern to my constituency of Northumberland, and particularly to my home town of Cobourg. It is also of great importance to a wide area of central Ontario. For some months we have heard repeated rumours that the Ontario Car Ferry Company, which operates the Ontario car ferries between Rochester, New York, and Cobourg, Ontario, would be discontinued. It has been proven that these rumours have real foundation because we have been told by the president of the Canadian National Railways that serious consideration is being given to the discontinuance of this car ferry service.

The Ontario Car Ferry Company is owned jointly by the Canadian National Railways and the Baltimore and Ohio Railway in the United States. The boats are under Canadian registry and therefore under Canadian management. They have been in operation for some forty years and have been used extensively for the movement of freight between Canada and the United States, and for passenger service between these two countries. I can understand that the minister might be loath to interfere in such a situation on the grounds it is one of internal management, but I suggest to him that it is not a