

Adjournment Debate

Let me give one example. I might point out that one of the bases of the economy of Newfoundland is a pulp and paper firm named Bowaters. A letter from that company dated November 1, 1976, states in part:

Bowaters' concern on some aspects of the development plan that will affect our economic viability to remain in business here is as follows:

i) The urgent necessity of a standard rail car ferry service to Corner Brook from some mainland marine rail terminal, for the shipping of our newsprint. Newsprint cars would normally come to Corner Brook empty but could bring in general freight. Many mainland publishers are now preferring to buy newsprint in small lots, delivered frequently by special, large, cushioned rail cars rather than ship-loads that must be warehoused and rehandled. More rail shipments would not only help us to develop and keep more northeastern markets but also would have the added advantage of more evenly scheduling the work of our warehouse and shipping personnel.

This is one example of the situation in respect of a basic industry in Newfoundland. It is obvious that the government is not investigating the thrust of the CN with regard to building an economic base and providing a responsible rail freight and express service in that province. I hope the parliamentary secretary will be able to give me an answer that indicates the intention of the minister relating to Newfoundland, and to its future which depends on transportation.

Mr. Ralph E. Goodale (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, while I have moved over to assume new responsibilities as Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council, I still maintain a very keen interest in Canadian transportation matters, and am glad to have the opportunity to pinch hit for the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) and his parliamentary secretary in replying once again to my hon. friend from Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe on a topic which I know is of great concern to him, and which the minister has indicated is of great concern to the government. To begin with I should like to quote from a portion of the minister's original answer to the hon. member on October 27. He said:

The question of Canadian National operations is, of course, largely for its management in a broad way, but I would be interested in having discussions with the province of Newfoundland and with other interested people on the whole question of transportation in Newfoundland both by rail and road. This is a vital issue in the province, one with which I am very much concerned.

Moments ago the hon. gentleman mentioned at least parts of the minister's original answer in the question which he addressed to the House this evening. As a result of the minister's concern about Newfoundland transportation generally and as a result of the hon. member's inquiries on this subject, a representative of the CTC has been in Newfoundland recently to examine closely the situation in question. I understand that his review has just now been completed, and I know the Minister of Transport will want to take a very close look at what this examination might reveal, and we hope that in that examination some of the answers to the inquiries which have been raised this evening and on other occasions will be found.

Furthermore, I think it is important to note that in a more general context and in co-operation with the provincial administration in Newfoundland, the Minister of Transport will continue efforts to examine a variety of different transpor-

[Mr. Marshall.]

tation issues including costs and shifting intermodal relationships which affect all modes operating in Newfoundland, as well as Atlantic transportation generally.

ENERGY—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF DOCUMENTS RELATING TO ESTABLISHMENT OF URANIUM REFINERY IN SASKATCHEWAN

Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, my question tonight arises from a response that I received from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) on October 22, 1976, when I raised a question which is causing growing concern among people in my constituency and in the adjacent constituency of Saskatoon-Humboldt with respect to the establishment of a uranium refinery which appears to be destined for just outside the city of Saskatoon near Warman, Saskatchewan. I questioned the minister at that time as to whether or not he would be good enough to table the various documents and agreements that were entered into between the province of Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada regarding their respective agencies.

All of us who read the Speech from the Throne will remember clearly the following statement:

At a time of growing complexity in public affairs it is especially important to enhance citizens' rate of access to information necessary to make well informed judgments and take responsible action.

That particular declaration in the Speech from the Throne gave me some hope that finally the government might be inclined to make public its plans, particularly with respect to the kind of facility that it is apparently planning in Saskatchewan.

I raised this question in the last session of parliament when I asked about the plans of the government. The parliamentary secretary indicated to me that Warman is one of the sites being considered in Saskatchewan. He indicated in his response to me on June 17, 1976, that the decision would be made and then they would have something called a public educational program for the people. In other words, apparently the decision will be made on this project and then they are going to explain to the people of Saskatchewan, and particularly of Saskatoon, how safe it is and what a great facility this will be. I do not think that is at all satisfactory. I wrote to the minister on July 5 of this year and stated to him in the strongest terms my apprehension about the course the government was following. I pointed out to him that there are many people who were communicating with me in Saskatoon and in the adjacent area asking what the government had in mind.

Virtually no information was forthcoming. The federal government was in conspiracy with the provincial NDP government apparently, and acquiring property and land for the establishment of this particular refinery, and not letting the people in the area have any idea of what was going on. There was some suggestion by the parliamentary secretary that after the decision was made there would be a public information program. I do not think that is satisfactory enough.