

*Supply—Transport*

St. Lawrence seaway authority. The house is committed almost unanimously to the construction of that waterway. It is hoped that ocean-going cargo vessels will be sailing to Fort William and Port Arthur. I sometimes think that the keenest advocates of the St. Lawrence seaway expect to see the *Queen Mary* dock in Toronto harbour some fine summer morning. In any event it is hoped that there will be many ocean-going vessels using that waterway. This is one development which should change our attitude toward the Canadian merchant navy.

We now have iron, and we should be able to make the steel to build these vessels. We have the oil with which to fuel them. We have the coal. We have uranium, and those other facilities required for the development of atomic energy. Hon. members will have noticed that within the last week or ten days it has been announced in the press that the United States has laid down the keel of the first submarine to be powered by atomic energy. Those are facts which Canadians should bear in mind when considering a Canadian merchant navy policy.

Five years ago, in the session of 1947, we passed an act setting up the Canadian maritime commission. At that time we had high hopes that the commission would be able to give a lead toward the modernization of the Canadian merchant navy. We find that in that act section 6 reads as follows:

The commission shall consider and recommend to the minister from time to time such policies and measures as it considers necessary for the operation, maintenance, manning and development of a merchant marine and shipbuilding and ship repairing industry commensurate with Canadian maritime needs.

There was a provision for the setting up of advisory committees to help the commission work out a policy for Canada. The act also gave very wide powers to the chairman of the commission. In effect, he was given the status of a deputy minister, and I believe was to be responsible directly to the Minister of Transport. That was a very fine start, and the commission was duly established. A chairman was appointed from the city of Vancouver, our most distinguished marine lawyer in the person of Mr. J. V. Clyne, now Mr. Justice Clyne of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, where he is doing an excellent job, just as he did as chairman of the commission.

Mr. Clyne resigned on July 7, 1950, almost two years ago, after having done a splendid job as chairman. One need only read the earlier reports of the commission to realize what an excellent job was done. The whole history of the Canadian merchant navy is therein set out, and recommendations are

[Mr. Green.]

made. I think each of the plans to which I have referred was recommended by Mr. Clyne and other members of his commission.

What has happened since then? Mr. Clyne resigned on July 7, 1950, and the deputy minister of transport, Mr. J. C. Lessard, assumed the chairmanship of the commission on December 13, 1950, five months later. I have no criticism to make of Mr. Lessard. I think he is an excellent deputy minister, doing a first class job in a department which presents just as many difficulties as any other department of government. He continues to be chairman of the commission to the present time. This can only mean that it is impossible to have the same consideration given to this policy as was given during the regime of Mr. Clyne. Mr. Lessard is frightfully busy in the discharge of his departmental activities. Certainly he is not in a position to work out a shipping policy for Canada under the present difficult conditions; and it will never be possible for the Canadian maritime commission to function as it was supposed to function until we have a full-time chairman. I should hope that the department would wake up and appoint a chairman, the best man they can find in the shipping industry, and that the appointment would be made without any further delay. I do not believe that under the present set-up the commission is being given a proper chance. Mr. Lessard and his fellow commissioners are not being given the opportunity to do a first class job. Something should be done to remedy this situation.

The annual reports of the commission are getting smaller and smaller. It appears that the commission is becoming just another branch of government; and in the last report which covers that period to the end of March 1951 there is no mention whatever of the need for a modernized merchant navy, or of any method of meeting that need. So much for the merchant navy policy.

There is another subject about which I should like to hear the minister speak, and that has to do with the national harbours board. Here we have a board set up in 1936, I believe it was, to take charge of the great national harbours of our country. That is a very important job. Yet we find a similar situation existing in the national harbours board. The annual report for the calendar year 1951 states that the vice-chairman of the board, Mr. J. E. St. Laurent, C.M.G., M.E.I.C., retired on July 1, 1951. Apparently he has not yet been replaced. Here we have a board which is not being carried on in the manner intended by the original act. For nearly a year now the