

*Transport Act*

is set out in chapter 271 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1952, which deals with the matter of transport by water. Section 10 of the act states:

The board—

—that is the board of transport commissioners—

—may, subject to the provisions of this part—

—that is, part II of the Transport Act—

—license ships to transport passengers or goods or both passengers and goods from a port or place in Canada to another port or place in Canada.

Section 11 (1) states:

No goods or passengers shall be transported by water, from one port or place in Canada to another port or place in Canada, either directly or by way of a foreign port or for any part of the transport, by means of any ship other than a ship licensed under this part.

The particular section of the bill which it is my proposal to amend is section 12, which in effect is an exempting section. Section 12 (2) says:

The governor in council may by regulation exempt any ship or class of ships from the operation of this part.

Section 12 (3) is quite specific in its terms and says:

The provisions of this part do not apply to the transport of goods in bulk in waters other than the Mackenzie river.

Then there is a further exempting provision in subsection 4 which says:

The provisions of this part do not apply in the case of ships engaged in the transport of goods or passengers

(a) between ports or places in British Columbia—

The net effect and the main purpose of my bill, apart from some consequential amendments to the Railway Act, are to remove from that exempting section of the Transport Act the phrase "between ports or places in British Columbia."

I would like to point out that though I introduced this idea to the house for the first time in the form of a bill in 1956, that was not the first occasion on which the subject matter of the bill had been discussed in the house.

The main provisions of the present transport legislation date back to 1938 and the act in its present form, basically, was introduced to this house by the late Right Hon. C. D. Howe who at that time was minister of transport. I remember pointing out on the first occasion on which I introduced this subject for the consideration of the house that when the measure was up for initial consideration in that year the very subsection to which I then referred, and which I now seek to have eliminated, was discussed at considerable length by the then hon. member for Comox-Alberni, Mr. A. W. Neill who, as

[Mr. Barnett.]

may be remembered, sat for many years in this house as an independent member representing the constituency which I now represent. Mr. Neill was at that time greatly concerned about this particular subsection, and the records show that when the bill was originally before the house in committee he sought, by motion, to have this particular provision deleted. I pointed out to the house in 1956 that while it was quite conceivable that one member from Comox-Alberni could be wrong in the conclusions he had reached as to the necessity for the deletion of this subsection, it was hardly likely that two of them would be in error in this regard, particularly when their conclusions had been arrived at on different occasions separated by a considerable period of years. So I feel I must be presenting to this house an idea worthy of favourable consideration.

It is true, and I think it should not be overlooked, that during the period which has elapsed since Mr. A. W. Neill first objected to this provision, a veritable revolution has taken place in the transportation pattern in coastal areas of British Columbia. It is true that those parts of the province which were then affected by the need for water transport still depend, by and large, upon the same means of conveyance. In the intervening years there has been some development of roads and highways along the coast, though not as great as one might suppose. But there has been a startling development in the field of air travel. Whereas in earlier years when this subject was before the house the only mode of travel up and down the coast was, almost without exception, by coastal vessel, today the bulk of those travelling back and forth from the various centres along the coast, and particularly from the areas north of the parts ordinarily referred to as the lower mainland and southern Vancouver island, travel by air.

One of the results of the development of air travel has, of course, been a drastic alteration in the whole pattern of travel by steamer. A great many of the steamer runs which had been known for years along the coast as well established runs have disappeared. One of them, and perhaps the best known, partly because of the number of summer tourists who patronized it, was the run of the famous steamer *Maquinna* along the west coast of Vancouver island. But the old and well known steamers of the former Union Steamship Company which used to sail the coast in a regular way for years have also disappeared entirely from the picture.

There has also been a marked change in the pattern of handling goods or freight. A great deal of the freight which is now carried up and down the coast is carried by