

Supply—Transport

Last Friday the minister announced a new shipping policy for Canada. Whatever our attitude may be toward subsidies—and I do not think anyone can deny that there are both advantages and disadvantages in government subsidy of any industry—I think most hon. members will agree that the shipping and shipbuilding industries are special industries, essential to the economy of Canada, and must be kept alive at all costs even if they require subsidization.

The actual benefit the shipping industry will receive from the policy announced by the minister last Friday cannot be assessed until we know what the regulations are going to be which will govern that assistance. So far these regulations have not been made known; therefore we are not in a position to evaluate just how effective this assistance will prove to be. It seems at the moment that while it will remove one of the obstacles with which the shipping industry has to contend—I refer to the extra cost of ship construction—most of our ships have been forced to foreign registry not so much by the capital investment involved in construction but by the operational costs of the ships after they are built. As far as we can see from this announcement, the new policy will not in any way provide assistance toward the cost of operation.

When the minister draws up these regulations I think it would be well if he kept in mind that the shipping industry itself is in a state of transition. I hope that ships built under this new policy will be modern in every sense. I hope the ships which are built will not become obsolete in a few years and before their useful lifetime has run out. There are two trends which are noticeable in the shipping industry at the present time. One is the trend toward ships with larger carrying capacities, and the other is toward ships for specialized cargoes.

We all know about the success of the Norwegian shipping industry. That country has done a great deal toward encouraging the building of specialized ships. In fact ships are being built to carry only Volkswagens from Europe to this country. That is the kind of specialization I am thinking about. I think we should keep that in mind when these regulations are being drafted.

The other point I want to ask the minister to consider in drawing up these regulations is this. I ask the minister to make sure that the regulations will cover the construction of wooden coastal vessels for Newfoundland. The announcement of the minister made special reference to wooden ships for the fishing fleet, but nothing was said about wooden vessels for the coastal trade. In Newfoundland we have people distributed

[Mr. Carter.]

around the coast line living in a large number of very small harbours. The only way supplies can be carried in and out to these people is by small wooden ships of anywhere from 50 tons up to perhaps 200 tons. These are the kind of ships which could be built in our own shipyards, and I am sure the minister wants to encourage the shipbuilding industry in Newfoundland as much as in any other province. Therefore I do hope the minister will take note of this special need as far as Newfoundland is concerned, and will frame the regulations so they will cover this particular kind of coastal ship.

I would also hope the minister will see fit to include in the regulations some subsidy or assistance toward the cost of life saving equipment. This has become imperative under the Canada Shipping Act. The kind of rubber life saving raft which is demanded today is a very expensive piece of equipment. These rafts cost anywhere from \$1,000 to \$5,000, and a ship may have to equip itself with two or three of them to meet the standards of safety required under the act. This is one of the instances where regulations under the Canada Shipping Act impose extra costs on Canadian ship owners which are not imposed on ships that operate under foreign registry.

In addition to the increase in shipping costs I should like to bring to the minister's attention the need for additional navigation aids, not only in my own district but in the whole of Newfoundland. When Newfoundland became part of Canada the Department of Transport, very wisely I think, decided that before increasing the number of navigation aids they should modernize and replace those which were already in existence.

This has now been done, and we are very grateful. However, there is a great need for additional navigation aids. To impress this fact upon the minister I suggest that he look at a number of charts. If the minister will get a set of charts of the Newfoundland coast and compare them with charts of the coast of Nova Scotia and other maritime provinces, he will see that the navigation aids along the Newfoundland coast are much fewer and much more widely dispersed than they are on the eastern coast of mainland Canada. If the minister will compare the charts of the Atlantic coast of the maritime provinces with the charts of the great lakes he will find an even greater contrast. There are many more navigation aids around the great lakes than there are around the Atlantic coast line.

We know that part of the reason for navigation aids is to facilitate the movement of