

Supply—Transport

of the peninsula would have been able to send goods to that area. If the railway had been built, goods could have been moved there more cheaply. But this government decided it would not spend the money on the railroad but that it would build a highway instead. Then instead of building it where they should have built it, they went outside the territory.

I should like the minister to clear up another ambiguity. Has any of this \$16 million intended for the railway been used to undertake any other project in Quebec? We hear many rumours to this effect. In fact one of the hon. gentleman's colleagues formerly in the cabinet said it was the intention to build a deep water harbour at Rivière du Loup with some of this money. These are matters which are most ambiguous. We would like the minister to clear them up once and for all and tell us whether the money which was provided by act of parliament is still available. We would like his assurance that these projects can be undertaken. We would also like to know whether the full amount given to the province in respect of highways can be spent on highways in this area. Then we should know where we stand.

I have discussed our rail transportation system. I have discussed highway construction on the north side of my riding. I should now like to speak about air transportation. It is true that at this time we are undertaking some repairs to the Gaspé airfield. I refer again to the speech made by the Minister of Transport on August 5, 1964. He said then that the department had undertaken a survey of the peninsula in order to find a proper site for a district airport which would serve the main towns in the county of Gaspé.

I believe this is by no means an easy problem. If we are to build a district airport in the interior of Gaspé it is bound to involve a lot of expense. I believe it would be much better to improve the airfield at Gaspé, to build another at Chandler and a third in the region of Ste Anne des Monts-Cap Chat area. By so doing we would be covering the whole of the lower section of the peninsula. We might then be in a position to encourage travel by air and secure ready access to this whole area.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if I might make an apology to the committee and ask one of my colleagues to act as Minister of Transport—I do not know whether this is quite

legal—while I go and get one of those sandwiches the hon. member spoke about so eloquently. I hope it will be a little better than those from Campbelltown.

Mr. Knowles: Why don't we all go for a sandwich?

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not think there is any compulsion on anyone else to sit here if he does not wish to.

Mr. Knowles: Which hon. member does the minister appoint?

Mr. Pickersgill: The President of the Privy Council. He has had his sandwich.

Mr. Carter: Apart from the Department of Public Works and the Department of Fisheries there is no federal department which touches the lives of my constituents as closely as does the Department of Transport. There are many matters I should like to deal with at this time, but in order not to unduly delay the passing of the estimates I will confine myself to one subject only, a subject which in my opinion is so urgent that I would be derelict in my duty to my constituents if I did not raise it at the very first opportunity.

Before I begin I should like to pay tribute to the officials of the Department of Transport, the officials of the minister's office, the senior officials and heads of branches in the head office here in Ottawa and to the district marine agent at St. John's. I should like publicly to express my gratitude to them for the sympathetic consideration they have always given to problems I have brought before them and for their all-out co-operation in trying to solve them.

The subject I wish to bring to the attention of the committee and of the government today is the urgent need for improvement in the C.N.R. coastal service in the western half of my riding. The constituency of Burin-Burgoe is made up of five provincial districts of which only one, the district of Burin, is accessible by road, and even this district is largely dependent on the C.N.R. coastal service for freight transportation. The other four provincial districts are completely dependent on the C.N.R. coastal service not only for transportation of freight but also for transportation of mail and passengers.

• (1:00 p.m.)

Of these four provincial districts, only Placentia West has a fairly satisfactory service based on the terminal at Argentia providing a frequency of two trips a week to all communities and three trips a week to the