

*Interim Supply Bill*

of a converted old Ford car which has been made into a form of truck and is so registered. These people are practically unable to leave their farms and go anywhere excepting by means of this type of old vehicle, and if they are prohibited from using it for any other purpose than to carry loads they will be subjected to much hardship.

Mr. PERLEY: I wish to join in this protest. I am doing it more or less because I am in a little personal difficulty with respect to it, because I advised one or two farmers in my district last spring to dispose of their cars and buy trucks. I gave this advice to one of my own tenants, knowing that the truck would be useful in carting out seed to the field and for many other purposes, but he finds now that he cannot use it when he wants to go to town on Saturday night to do his shopping, and his wife is no longer able, as was her habit in other years, to do a lot of running around to town and elsewhere. I could cite several similar cases. I think something should be done. These trucks are practically as comfortable as some of the old cars and are useful for going around on Saturday nights and Sundays. A neighbour of mine, a dairyman, disposed of his car and got a truck because he could use it in his general business as well as to deliver his milk, and it is a great handicap to him not to be able to use it on Sundays and in the evenings for the purposes of the household.

Mr. ROY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to draw the committee's attention to a regulation which limits to fifteen miles the business radius of taxis in the province of Quebec.

On the north coast of Gaspé county, where there is no railroad between Matane and Gaspé, that is for a distance of over two hundred miles, this regulation has brought about a totally abnormal situation from which the local population will undoubtedly suffer unless something is done.

Following representations which I made to the war supplies department, the limit was extended from fifteen to thirty miles. Yet, this is still not enough to answer the needs of the population. From midway between the two railroad terminals at Matane and Gaspé, there is a distance of one hundred miles to travel to reach the nearest rail line, a distance which becomes shorter from village to village until one reaches the thirty mile limit.

The two nearest hospitals are located at St. Anne des Monts and Gaspé, that is a distance of one hundred and fifty miles. In case of illness or a bad accident, no taxi can reach the St. Anne des Monts hospital, or that in Gaspé, if it has to start from a point outside the thirty mile limit.

[Mr. Howden.]

I think that in consideration of this unusual situation, the government should allow taxis in each of these localities, outside the thirty mile limit, to travel as far as is necessary to reach the nearest railroad terminal or hospital.

Mr. GAUTHIER: Hear, hear.

Mr. MacINNIS: While we are on this matter I might as well point out that I am a pioneer in bringing it forward. I raised it some three weeks ago when the Minister of Munitions and Supply had his share of the war appropriation bill before the committee. It is a condition which affects people in the urban centres as well as those in the rural districts, and frankly I do not know just how the oil controller is going to be able to satisfy everybody. It brings into more glaring relief a consequence of our social system. One of my constituents has a light delivery truck. He used it for business deliveries in the week, and on Sundays he took the family to one of the beaches round Vancouver, going sometimes as far as White Rock. Possibly his next-door neighbour, also having a delivery business, is well enough off to have a private car as well as a truck. He also takes his family out on Sundays, and the man who cannot afford a private car as well as a light delivery truck did not grudge his neighbour his car so long as he himself could use his delivery truck, but now he finds himself in the position that if he takes his family out in the truck on Sundays he is warned by the controller that his ration book will be taken away from him. The other man has his truck ration book and also his private ration book. So here is a social distinction, possibly not a very great one in ordinary times, but one which now comes out in all its glaring inequality. My correspondent sends me the letter he received from the regional controller, and I must admit that it was quite reasonable. There is no fault to be found there, and I am at a loss to know how the matter can be dealt with and yet do what it is intended to be done by the regulations to conserve gas, unless we cut out all travel on Sunday except what is essential.

Mr. McIVOR: I have a case which presents the other side. A farmer sold his truck and kept his car. He is a grocer merchant and delivers with his car because it saves gas, but he was face to face with the difficulty that while the other merchants in the city obtained a commercial rating he was cut down to class B, and like myself he does not like it. If he cuts down on gas by using his car he should have enough gas to carry him through the year so that he can make his living. Of course, there are two sides to every question except truth and error.