

*Interim Supply*

persons in my area or engaged in the transport service in general, in connection with postal service to the people in my area which could stand much improvement?

I would also like to ask him another question. He states that present timetables no longer correspond to passengers' needs or to the improvements his department would like to bring about.

I would like to give him an example. You leave Campbellton at five o'clock in the morning. Would it not be possible to modify the train timetable so that it would leave Montreal an hour earlier and get into Gaspé at about one or two o'clock in the afternoon? This would improve train and sleeper service, and it would benefit residents of the Gaspé peninsula, who make use of it.

Thus, they could travel more easily and have their meals on board the train, instead of mere sandwiches. Just recently, we left Montreal and already there was no more chicken pie left. The train left Campbellton on the return trip to Montreal the next day and we were told: There were too many passengers last night, so there is nothing left to eat.

I therefore feel this service could be improved, along with improvement in the postal service.

**Mr. Côté (Longueuil):** Mr. Chairman, I can answer this question briefly. The only interest which I presently have, as Postmaster General, is to improve postal service in the country. As my department is in charge of organizing postal service in the Gaspé peninsula, I do not feel it is in my interest or in the interest of residents of the Gaspé peninsula to wait until Canadian National Railways modify its time-tables or improve its service.

My responsibility is to improve postal service so that Gaspé residents may get their mail much faster and, with the new service, the hon. member is aware that several Gaspé residents will probably get their mail one day sooner.

However, I would point out to the hon. member that this is the first time he raises the question in the house, notwithstanding the fact that, when I visited the Gaspé peninsula, he accompanied me on several occasions, and I was happy to have him with me, when we visited the beautiful Gaspé peninsula. As you know, Mr. Chairman, my wife comes from that area. If the hon. member had thought of it at that time, he would have been able to submit his request to the

[Mr. Keays.]

hon. Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill), for I am not in a position to assist him in that regard.

**Mr. Keays:** Mr. Chairman, I accompanied the minister on a few occasions in the Gaspé peninsula, but he did not invite me to speak; therefore, I did not have any opportunity to make that request to him.

Nevertheless, I ask him humbly to improve the mail service in the Gaspé peninsula if possible. I also ask him to approach the Minister of Transport with a view to improving passenger service in the Gaspé peninsula.

**Mr. Côté (Longueuil):** I pledge myself to do that, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Keays:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister.

[*English*]

**Mr. Alkenbrack:** Mr. Chairman, I join the debate on interim supply at this time when it is our parliamentary duty and privilege to put before you our various grievances. I intend to discuss the vital matter of defence, as I see its application in my part of Canada. I also intend to discuss some matters pertaining to transport and to public works, as well as an important agricultural matter relating to businesses engaged in the processing of milk.

When we turn our attention to the defence of our country and to the alarming facts which we have learned in the past year with regard to the deterioration in efficiency and in the morale of our armed forces, we can come to no other conclusion than that the minister and his department have failed in their duties to the Canadian people. In spite of the bonuses and financial bait which the minister has offered to men to induce them to join the armed forces, all the facts show nothing but a steady weakening and deterioration of the military forces. I remind the minister that this undesirable situation is partly a result of the policy which he has pursued in abandoning the volunteer militia system of recruitment.

I have made inquiries in my riding from military men of many ranks and varied experience. They all point to the great need of basing Canada's defences on a small but intensively trained regular army acting as an instructional cadre for citizen soldiers forming a well trained and competent militia which can be quickly brought to full strength in case of war. I pointed this out to the house in committee of the whole last February 22, as appears at page 1591 and 1592 of *Hansard*. At