

*Supply—Transport*

friend the hon. member for Welland, but I am happy to support some of the statements he has made. I wish to thank the hon. member for advising me that he intended to speak on this matter at this time. It is a question that affects a great many people in the riding which I have the honour to represent.

These employees of the Canadian National Railways are being displaced by reason of the fact that the company is discontinuing the local bus service some time in the near future. I suggest to the minister that in view of the long and important transportation service the C.N.R. has supplied to the people in the Niagara peninsula he take a personal interest in this matter of discontinuing the service.

The city of St. Catharines alone has a population of approximately 84,000 people, and this local public transportation system is extremely important. Therefore I recommend to the minister that his department co-operate to the fullest extent with the municipalities in that area in providing a continuing service to the public, as well as in adequately and generously providing a fair settlement of pension and other employment separation problems for all employees who will be displaced.

I understand negotiations are under way between the council of the corporation of the city of St. Catharines and the Canadian National Railways to provide ways and means whereby the city may purchase the assets of the local company and operate the service as a municipal public utility. I also understand that negotiations are under way between the employees of the C.N.R. bus operation in St. Catharines and the C.N.R. officials. I offer my wholehearted support to both the city of St. Catharines and the railway employees in their negotiations with the Canadian National Railways and I urge the minister to make sure that there is ample time allowed for a just and reasonable settlement of both the employees severance problems and the question of future ownership of the company before the C.N.R. discontinues operations.

I extend to the minister my full support with respect to the statement of new government policy concerning shipping operations and shipbuilding. In my opinion this is the most important and constructive decision this government has made in recent years. It is a policy designed to save the Canadian ship operators from complete deterioration which might well have taken place if Canadian ship owners had been forced to continue transferring their ships to British or other registry in order to remain competitive with the foreign vessels trading in our inland waters at the present time.

Shipbuilding which is an old industry in Canada, and a long established industry in

my riding will benefit greatly from the proposed new regulations providing for ship construction subsidies. Subsidies toward the cost of shipbuilding may be new in Canada, but they are not new in almost all other countries which engage in shipbuilding. While I do not think subsidizing industry is a permanent solution, Canada's shipbuilding industry has had to contend with serious problems of competition from subsidized European and other shipbuilding yards, and I am sure this new assistance will speed up maximum production in all Canadian shipyards and will provide thousands of new jobs not only in the shipyards but also in other allied trades.

I wish now to say a word about Canada's proposed new coastguard service. This is a matter about which I have spoken in this house on several occasions over the past few years. I have urged that Canada should have at least one first class salvage and rescue vessel on each of the great lakes capable of providing fire protection and doing towing and general salvage and rescue work. I have long felt that we rely too much on the United States coastguard service. With the coming of the seaway and the recent tremendous increase in pleasure craft on the great lakes a service of our own, to work in conjunction with that of the United States, in my opinion is urgently needed.

I again draw to the attention of the minister the need for regional airports with adequate facilities for non-scheduled and scheduled passenger and freight transportation in areas that are highly industrialized and are not adjacent to major airports of Trans-Canada Air Lines. In the Niagara peninsula, part of which is in my riding, we have such a requirement. Most of the municipalities in the area have formed a commission and operate an airport which is owned by the Department of Transport and is located near the city of St. Catharines. Over the past three years the Department of Transport has provided such facilities as night lighting and directional beacons, and has purchased additional land for future expansion.

However, the big problem today is the fact that the runways were built for light planes and are both too short and too light in construction for DC-3 planes to land and take off from them. Some of our industries with large company planes have been obliged to house them at Buffalo or Niagara Falls, New York, which is a great inconvenience. We have a very active Royal Flying Club with a large number of small planes, as well as many privately owned small planes. It is a customs airport, but it lacks the essential runway with a length of 4,000 feet to 5,000 feet.

In the Niagara peninsula there is no airport with runways over 2,800 feet in length,

[Mr. Smith (Lincoln).]