

*Supply—Transport*

that is paid as subventions to the east coast service, that is, somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$5,750,000, or a larger portion than now, were provided for the west coast shipping facilities we might have less cause for complaint along the west coast than we do at the moment, because when you compare \$294,500 as the subvention for west coast service with some \$5,800,000 on the east coast you can easily see the preponderance of money that goes to one area as compared with the other.

When my time expired the other day I had made slight reference to the fact that there was a degree of politics which entered into the shipping facilities available to the west coast. I believe it was this comment and the reference to Union Steamships that probably occasioned the desire by the hon. member for Vancouver South to go into the subsidies of Union Steamships. There is no doubt that some concern was expressed, there was some disagreement, over Union Steamships having a monopoly on west coast shipping and a monopoly on the subventions. When I first heard of it this complaint was voiced by hon. members associated with the party which is no longer represented here. I refer to members of the Social Credit party. This, of course, tied in with their activities with the provincial Social Credit government in British Columbia. Their complaints were directed against the fact that an honourable Senator in the other place, namely Senator McKeen, was the owner of Union Steamships and also a Liberal, and that there was something underland and nefarious in this type of arrangement.

I do not hold any brief, nor did I ever, for one of those companies over the other, be it Union Steamships, Northland Navigation Company or any other company which might be involved. I am concerned solely and simply with the question of service. There are a number of factors, of course, which have contributed to the decline in service, which I should like to deal with for just a moment. I would point out also that when Union Steamships appeared before the royal commission on coastal trade, it was one of the two shipping companies that wanted to be completely exempted from the provisions of the Combines Investigation Act in its activities on shipping. In its report the royal commission, of course, declined to accept the suggestion of Union Steamships and of the other company whose name escapes me at the moment. The royal commission did not recommend that they be exempt from the provisions of the Combines Investigation Act.

I should like to give the committee in words other than mine an indication of some of the difficulties experienced by one of the up-coast

communities by reading a short reference or two from a letter dated January 30, 1960 from Bella Bella, addressed to me and signed by a nurse at the large memorial hospital that the United Church of Canada has at Bella Bella, and also a letter along the same lines from the matron of that hospital. Before I do read it may I say I received a communication from Dr. Darby, from the hospital also, on this same sort of thing. As I said, this letter is addressed to me and reads in part:

re: Northland Navigation Service

I don't know whether I do any more complaining than anyone else in your constituency,—

This is because I received other communications from the same people in the same community at the same hospital about activities of Northland Navigation Company and its discontinuing service over the Christmas period without any notice or without any notification to the Canadian maritime commission. They had written before. The letter continues:

—but we have just been advised this morning that Northland is withdrawing their *Skeena Prince*—

This is one of the ships they have.

—from serving our area. This was supposed to be our passenger service, although frankly, who would want to travel on it, I don't know. Of late months they have been more co-operative about bringing the *Canadian Prince* around this way, but refuse to land at the government wharf, which necessitates going out in a boat to board her. This is all right for someone who is able to jump from boat to boat, but at any time it is not too safe a method of boarding a boat.

I should like to point out what occurs when the steamer stops at Campbell Island or Bella Bella. Often there are hospital patients who either board the boat or leave it at this particular point. With the steamer stopped out in the stream, as it were, necessitating someone going out in a launch to meet it, one can understand the difficulties that are experienced and how unsafe it would be at some periods of the year. It might be perfectly safe on a calm day but those hon. members who know the west coast know that particularly in the fall, winter and spring months the waters can become very rough by reason of storms, winds and rain. There are often winds blowing and a high sea running with turbulent waters caused by tides and so on and conditions are extremely difficult for anyone who has to go out in a small launch to board this particular Northland Navigation Company boat.

Complaints have been made about this matter on quite a number of occasions and I merely make this one reference to the words of this young lady, Miss Betty Wilson, who is a nurse at the hospital, in order to indicate

[Mr. Howard.]