

*Supply—Transport*

The board of transport commissioners should undertake to give a share to Quebec City to provide it with overpasses where trains cross the busiest streets.

I know that the subject has been under consideration for a long time. I know that the Minister of Transport is aware of this problem. I know that some officials of his department have been investigating for many years in this field. Such an investigation has been requested for 25 or 30 years. But is it not the opinion of the Minister of Transport that the time has come to end all these investigations and to build the necessary overpass in the city of Quebec?

Then, I shall ask the Minister of Transport—I know that he is aware of this problem—to make a statement in this connection, so that the citizens of Quebec may know where they stand with regard to level crossings in the city of Quebec.

• (9:40 p.m.)

Another thing, Mr. Chairman. The St. Lawrence should be open to winter navigation up to Montreal. I know this is becoming a ticklish matter for the people of the Maritimes. Far be it from me to favour the economy of port cities along the St. Lawrence at the expense of the Maritime provinces. But progress requires that navigation be open to Montreal the year round. It is possible and easily feasible.

Should needs arise in the Maritime provinces, we will then be the first to cooperate and urge the government to take whatever steps are necessary to develop the economy of the Maritime provinces as much and as quickly as the economy of the other provinces of Canada. On condition, however, that it does not prove detrimental to the other areas, but helps the other areas while helping the Maritimes also.

There is one last point I should like to raise tonight, Mr. Chairman. It is not so much a local or a regional problem as a national problem.

The question of bilingualism within the two most important transport companies in Canada, both crown companies, namely the Canadian National and Air Canada has been very much discussed and still is.

Mr. Chairman, I have often talked about that matter in this house. I have had the opportunity to discuss it sometimes rather firmly with the president of the Canadian National Railways and the president of Air Canada.

[Mr. Grégoire.]

I must say that tremendous improvements have been made in the last three or four years, since we started to fight for bilingualism with the Crown corporations. I believe these two Crown corporations ought to be commended up to a point for such an improvement.

But, Mr. Chairman, I must say to the Minister of Transport that this improvement in only superficial yet and that it has not reached as yet any depth. It is only what appears in the open that has been favoured with bilingualism. Of course we have now bilingual picture posters, bilingual air hostesses, and on the trains, in the majority of cases, not on all trains, but in the majority of cases, the train conductors or inspectors have become bilingual. On the other hand, bilingualism has not reached any depth, yet, far from it.

People who wish to communicate with the offices of those companies have to write in English, otherwise their answers come only five or six weeks later on account of the delay resulting from the translation of such letters. The translation officers are not efficient enough to permit people communicating with them to receive answers within a normal period of time.

Whenever people are asking for forms to fill in, everything comes in English. I can give you an example, Mr. Chairman, which is quite recent and which I would like to bring to the attention of the Minister of Transport. Yesterday, or rather this morning, while arriving at the Ottawa airport, I found that I had lost my suitcase. No more luggage on arrival at Ottawa airport, no razor, no pyjamas, nothing at all, my bag having gone to Toronto; it was still travelling, it had remained on the plane while I was stepping off.

I went and asked that my bag be retrieved because I needed my luggage. I was asked to fill out a form, written in English only. In the Ottawa Airport, the clerk behind the counter did not understand a single word in French.

At one time there was a telephone call during which not a single word was said in French. I mean that the same clerk behind the counter was advised by phone that a plane had been diverted from its regular course and would land in Ottawa. The first thing he asks is: I hope that everyone understands English, because I do not speak or understand French.

He asked me to fill out the card in English. If the minister so wishes I can give him my copy now because I received my