

Supply—Transport

North Bay at midnight. We must wait until we get to North Bay before going to bed and then get off the train at Swastika and take another train to get to Rouyn-Noranda. There are 35,000 people in those two cities and over 100,000 in the area.

We get to Swastika around 5.30 or 6 in the morning. We go to bed at 1.30 in North Bay and get off at Swastika at six o'clock. It takes at least half an hour to get ready, which means that we get only four hours' sleep or so during the night and get to Rouyn at 8.30.

When we want to come back to Ottawa, we take the train at 6.30 p.m., I think, as far as Swastika. From Swastika we cannot have a bed either because there is no sleeping car accommodation from North Bay to Ottawa.

We reach North Bay at about two in the morning and from North Bay to Ottawa it is impossible to get a berth on C.N.R. trains.

Mr. Chairman, I feel that C.N.R. authorities—and I also include the O.N.R., known as the Ontario Northern Railway—should urge this latter company to tie in with other systems, so that we might at least get one sleeping car on the run from Ottawa to Northern Ontario and northwestern Quebec, up to Rouyn-Noranda and return.

It was claimed that the line is uneconomic and that nobody wants to travel by train. This is understandable. Nobody from Ottawa, not only among members of the area but among the general public, is interested to board a train in Ottawa without being able to sleep until Rouyn-Noranda.

The minister himself would not ride on that train.

Mr. Pickersgill: Right you are.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Chairman, the minister says I am right. If he were to tell me that I am so right that he will act to let us have this sleeping car to and from Rouyn-Noranda, I would say he means it when he says I am right.

These are some of the recommendations I had for the Minister of Transport. Yesterday, my colleague from Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire) mentioned the considerable improvements in the Department of Transport, Air Canada etc. as far as bilingualism is concerned. It is a fact. There are still improvements to be made, though.

I noticed when we had the opportunity—and you were one of those, Mr. Chairman—of taking the Air Canada flight from London to return home to Montreal, we had bilingual

[Mr. Caouette.]

air hostesses, speaking English as well as French and French as well as English.

We were delighted to note this improvement on boarding the plane in London. I noticed the same thing travelling from Ottawa to Victoria in British Columbia.

Even pilots who know very little French had the courtesy to tell us, during the flight, at what altitude and speed we were flying. They tried to tell us in French. This is a marked improvement compared to the situation a few years ago.

On this score, we must congratulate the minister and encourage him to continue in the right direction. We do not want to take anything away from anyone, but we want everyone to be respected. It is through mutual respect, and I feel the minister has understood this, that we will have a more united Canada, a country with better understanding, greater assurance and greater development.

[*English*]

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Chairman, having listened to a great deal of the debate on the Department of Transport estimates, a stanza of a brief poem runs through my mind. It is a very simple one:

My heart is warm with the friends I make,
And better friends I would not be knowing.
But there isn't a train I wouldn't take
No matter where it's going.

It seems to me that the lady who penned those lines, were she in Canada these days, would find occasionally there are no trains she could take because they are being cut off.

I think too, we will find that if there is not a change in policy we will not be making friends, particularly this year and next year with the centennial celebrations that will be going on in this country, and the demands that are going to be made on all our transport services, including rail transport.

The poem had an air of nostalgia about it, but I would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that there are many factors in the rail situation that are not nostalgic. Transportation is necessary. There are people who depend on the railway for their transportation and for their livelihood. There are towns and communities that, to an amazing extent, still depend on the railway both for providing jobs for the working force and providing transportation. One of these is my constituency.

I think it imperative that the Board of Transport Commissioners, for a variety of reasons, do something about the removal of