

*Supply—Transport*

went some considerable distance in building up the revenue and were able to keep expenses on a substantially level basis.

I am not going to discuss the matter at greater length here, but I hope that when the general estimates for this department are considered the minister will be here and that he will give assurance to the house that the department will consider extending the service.

The company has five small non-refrigerated boats and only three refrigerated ships. These ships travel in tropical waters to the West Indies and we hope to South America, so you can realize the importance of refrigeration. If they can do so well with so little I think it reflects credit on the company, and I hope another year we will have an increase which will provide for an extension of their operations.

**Mr. Bell:** Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could tell us if this is still on a one-year basis. When we questioned the Minister of Finance last year he was very careful to point out that the plans made last year were for one year only. In view of the fact that we have had a fairly successful year, I wonder if that changes the plans or if it is just going to be drawn up for another year?

**Mr. Harris:** I think the Minister of Transport would give an adequate answer to that.

Item agreed to.

614. Canadian National Railways deficit, 1954—amount required to provide for the payment during the fiscal year 1954-55, to the Canadian National Railway Company (hereinafter called the national company) upon applications approved by the Minister of Transport, made by the national company to the Minister of Finance, and to be applied by the national company in payment of the system deficit (certified by the auditors of the national company) arising in the calendar year 1954, subject to recovery therefrom of accountable advances made to the national company from the consolidated revenue fund, \$28,758,098.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** Is the minister really going to ask us to vote \$28 million before we have the report of the committee on government-owned railways? The committee has not yet been set up, and it has not yet met the officials of the railway. Surely the usual practice is that when this vote comes on it comes before this committee with the approval of the committee on government-owned railways. It is true that it is near the end of the fiscal year, but we are not there yet.

**Mr. Harris:** I am sure I would not mind if my hon. friend wishes to discuss this in the committee, and we could allow this item to stand, though I would hope it would be the only one.

Nevertheless, I might point out that I think I have announced the motion to appoint this committee every day during the past week, and we have never reached it. I would hope that my hon. friend would co-operate with me in getting the committee set up; then the work could be done, I would think, on Monday, or Tuesday or Wednesday at the latest, because we shall have to pass this item on Wednesday or Thursday if there is to be royal assent. I beg hon. members' pardon. We would have to pass it on Tuesday in order to have it passed in the other place.

We must do either one of two things. Either we pass it tonight or we shall have to hasten the work of the committee in a manner that I do not think will be possible at all. But I do not accept too much responsibility. I shall give my hon. friend the assurance that if the item is passed tonight it will not in any way prevent a full discussion of the Canadian National Railways item in the committee when it meets.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** It seems to me extremely undesirable to pass an item of \$28 million without going through the procedure which is now well established. If, by some chain of circumstances for which no one is responsible, we have reached the stage where the thing could not be carried through, that is another matter. But as the minister has indicated, if we proceed with dispatch on Monday the thing can be done. I would hope that he could find an extra day. I hope it will not go to Tuesday. I think he had better put pressure on the other place to give him an extra day.

**Mr. Harris:** I could not do that.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** To come back to the point, I suggest to the minister that it is highly undesirable to do this. Certainly as far as I am concerned—and I think I can speak for my colleagues—we will co-operate in the setting up of that committee on Monday. As a matter of fact I thought it was going to be done today, and it was a great disappointment to me that it has not been done. But that is another matter. I am putting it to the minister. He himself suggested a means whereby this can be done next week, and this seems to me a much more desirable course than passing this item now.

**Mr. Harris:** I would not want my hon. friend to misunderstand the situation. I am sure that if the committee is set up, by motion, by dinner time on Monday that would be the earliest we could hope for such action, and the committee could only meet on Tuesday. I do not suppose he would want to pass all items of the Canadian National Railways in