

sideration. I admit it is a local issue. The only opportunity the farmers have of dealing with an injustice is through their local member who has to deal through the minister. I would urge the minister to use his influence a little to see that the farmers in my riding particularly get a fair deal.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Just one word in reply to the hon. member for Fraser Valley. I am not familiar with the details of the railways—

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Your predecessors are.

Mr. CHEVRIER: —to which he referred. I do not think there is anything in the department—I know there is nothing in my office that would set out the circumstances such as he has related them. I am not saying that they are not such as he has said they are. There is another thing my hon. friend must keep in mind. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company is a private corporation; it is not under the jurisdiction of the federal government as the Canadian National Railway is. The Minister of Transport or the government have no direct jurisdiction over the Canadian Pacific Railway Company; but I certainly shall be pleased to communicate with the company and bring to their attention the complaint which my hon. friend has made. As soon as I receive their reply, I shall communicate it to him, but I presume it will be some time after prorogation.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Thank you. I want to make one correction with regard to what the minister has said. I admit that it is a private corporation; but I say that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company receive all the benefits, all the privileges from the board of transport commissioners who are responsible to this government and to parliament; consequently the minister and this parliament have something to say in the matter.

Mr. WINTERS: I wish to say just a few words on this item before it passes. I can think of no better way of starting than by complimenting the minister for the efficient way in which his department has rendered service in the constituency of Queens-Lunenburg during the past year. I refer to the department generally, but in particular I should like to say their service in the navigation aids branch has been good and they have made a very fine improvement in the Canadian National railway between Halifax and Yarmouth. At last we have a service on that railroad which compares favourably in quality with any that may be found elsewhere

in Nova Scotia and in many parts of Canada. With a little more speed we shall indeed have a fine service.

In particular, I wish to lay two problems before the minister tonight, one in connection with the special merchant seamen bonus, and the other a little later in connection with benefits for Canadian National employees. Generally speaking, merchant seamen special bonuses are paid to seamen who qualify by virtue of the fact that they served in dangerous waters and received a war risk bonus. I believe that the merchant seamen special bonus has been paid to many seamen who served on Canadian government ships, but there is one class who have not been able to qualify for this bonus. I refer to the seamen who served on fishery protection boats operated by the Department of Fisheries. To all intents and purposes these seamen are merchant seamen in every sense of the word except possibly one. I understand that these seamen on the fishery patrol boats signed on under continuing articles of agreement rather than Canadian articles of agreement, and therein lies the only distinction between these seamen and bona fide merchant mariners. The seamen on the fishery patrol boats were given the merchant seamen's pin; they were given documents stating that they served in the merchant navy, and in fact they were registered under the merchant navy.

The department has been very good and flexible in its arrangements for payment of the merchant seamen special bonus. It extended the time limit on the regulation several times to permit seamen who failed to take advantage of the dateline to qualify. But there is this class of seamen who are still debarred, and I can see no good reason for it. According to the regulations, they may not be merchant seamen in fact, but in my opinion they were in deed. They qualify in every respect except for those few words, "continuing articles of agreement", as against "Canadian articles of agreement". There is, therefore, this deserving class of people debarred from the benefits. I would urge upon the minister that he give them every consideration by attempting to broaden the interpretation of the regulations. I believe that, in terms of the spirit of the regulations, these deserving seamen qualify, and I would ask the minister to see if they cannot be brought under the regulations.

The next problem I should like to place before the minister is in connection with benefits to employees of the Canadian National Railways. It is somewhat along the lines of the problems raised by the hon. member for