

*Supply—Transport*

would announce as soon as possible when the schedule could be resumed. I asked him again this morning, Mr. Chairman, when the *Bluenose* would be put back in operation again and he said he would inform the house as soon as possible. Again, Mr. Chairman, you get this thriller situation, this being kept in suspense. The minister dealing with this matter is maintaining the very best traditions of Hitchcock, the great dramatic director of thriller movies, in keeping us in suspense as to what is going to happen next with respect to this craft.

I think the minister should deal with this matter. I think he should have dealt with it today. We were told there was damage to the propellers. We were told last Tuesday that the repairs had been completed the day before; that was on Monday of this week. It is perhaps a matter of three hours' sailing time from Saint John to Yarmouth. Why has the boat not been put back into operation? Why has the schedule not been resumed? Why is the minister today, on Friday of this week, in respect of a boat on which repairs were completed last Monday, not able to tell us when it is going to resume operations? Somebody says that perhaps Dan Riley can tell us. I do not know. There are only two reasons, Mr. Chairman. Either this is being used as an excuse to discontinue the operation, which I suggest the minister did not want to start anyway, or else there was far more serious damage done to the boat than has been intimated by the damage to the propellers.

It has been reported in the press, or at least there have been letters in the press—I refer to the *Halifax Herald*—this week saying that one propeller was damaged. They kept that quiet. There were reports that the other propeller was damaged. They wanted to keep that quiet because the chapter of errors was so horrible. Therefore they continued to operate her with a twisted propeller, and as a result they developed a torque, whatever that may be. I understand it is a twist or warp perhaps in the shaft. The minister may therefore be faced—and I hope he will disabuse our minds on this point; I hope I am wrong—with the dire possibility of having to take out those worm gears again. I am fairly sure it cannot be so, because the minister could not look as benign and happy and cheerful as he does right now if that were the case.

**Mr. Marler:** I was thinking that the worm gears and the hon. member's imagination were working overtime.

**Mr. Nowlan:** It is no imagination to the people of Yarmouth, Mr. Chairman, who have been waiting for this service for six years,

[Mr. Nowlan.]

who have had it operating for two weeks and now the Minister of Transport cannot tell them when it is going to start operating again. I wish the imagination of the Minister of Transport would start working, and that he would tell us when it will start. I will give him the opportunity. If he wants a crystal ball, perhaps the Minister of Trade and Commerce who operates the T.C.A. for him will lend him the crystal ball in order to tell us when he will start it again.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** He has it out on loan now.

**An hon. Member:** It is up in Laurier house.

**Mr. Nowlan:** It is all right to treat the matter humorously here, but it is no laughing matter as far as the people in western Nova Scotia are concerned. They were cut off almost entirely from travel service this summer because of a combination of circumstances, for some of which the minister was not responsible. Because of the strike on the *Princess Helene* there was a time when you could not get out of western Nova Scotia except by motor car, because the only other way you could get out was by T.C.A., which was booked up far in advance.

Through the department the minister chartered the O.K. Freight Service, which was to supplement the carrying of fish and other perishable products to Boston owing to the undue and absolutely inexcusable delay in putting the *Bluenose* into operation. The second the *Bluenose* came back the minister took a quick glance at his crystal ball and discontinued the subsidies to the O.K. Freight Service. Now he has told us that he can not be sure whether he is going to restore any service. The fishermen and others in the western part of Nova Scotia are absolutely cut off from any ferry transportation facilities whatever. I think the time has come when we should know definitely when this service is to be started again.

One could discuss the charges which are imposed on truck traffic on that boat, but I think that is perhaps an illusory matter at the moment. Why discuss charges which the minister imposes on trucks when he has not a boat in operation with which to carry the trucks? I understand that after today there will be no further discussion of these estimates for some little time, probably. I hope that by the time we come back to them the boat will be in operation. Then we will be able to discuss these rates. I have telegrams here from several shippers who have used the *Bluenose* service, and they find it cheaper to bring their materiel over to Saint John, across to Digby and back to Yarmouth rather than to bring it by truck on the *Bluenose*.