

tive of one of the American railways operating on the Pacific coast told the committee that the directors of his company had established an autobus system extending for 150 miles or more along highways paralleling their railway, so as to keep his company out of the red by preventing the loss of passenger traffic to competitive bus companies. As my right honourable friend has stated, our railways should have awakened sooner to the necessity of retaining their freight and passenger business by developing truck and bus services. The present situation is somewhat similar. Only two weeks ago we heard evidence before our Railway Committee of the amazing volume of freight and passengers carried by aeroplane companies in the northern mining regions. The air transport system across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific is capable of tremendous development and I am sure the Canadian National Railways will stand to gain by participating in that development.

Our Railway Committee will have the opportunity of hearing the honourable Minister of Transport, who is responsible for this proposal. Evidently he has not acted with his eyes shut. This is his statement of personal experience:

This is a very difficult problem, and before coming to a final conclusion I think I exhausted all available sources of information. I have ridden in every type of equipment used on the mail routes in the United States; I have discussed the problem with the heads of all the successful trans-American companies; I have had the privilege of discussing the problem with the General Manager of Imperial Airways and with officers of the British Air Ministry, and I have read every report in this connection that I have been able to lay my hands on. As a result of all this I have come to certain conclusions. The discussion we have had in the House to-night, all of which I know has been very friendly and offered in an earnest desire to bring about the best possible result, has brought out at least four different views as to how this work should be undertaken. After listening to the discussion I am convinced that this Bill offers the most practical solution that can be suggested. I believe we have safeguarded ourselves at every point.

When the honourable Minister of Transport appears before our committee we shall receive first-hand information on the subject-matter of the Bill.

I move second reading.

Hon. Mr. DUFF: Before—

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: My honourable friend has already spoken.

Hon. Mr. DUFF: I have noticed that other honourable members have been allowed to speak a second time, and I cannot under-

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.

stand why my honourable leader is so desirous of shutting me off.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: It is not a question of shutting off my honourable friend. When I rose I looked around to see if any other honourable members desired to speak, and as no one apparently desired to do so, I proceeded to close the debate. If my honourable friend wishes to make another speech I shall have to reply to him, and there may be no end to the discussion.

Hon. Mr. DUFF: I do not object to my honourable friend replying to me, but certainly I should be given an opportunity to answer certain statements which have been made. I was courteous enough to defer to him, as he has had far more experience in this Chamber than I can yet claim.

My honourable friend's apparent conversion to public ownership reminds me of Agrippa's remark to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian." A serious principle is involved. It is all very well for honourable gentlemen to say, "We must have this transportation system in order to compete with other people," but I would remind them that we must cut our garment according to the cloth. If a private company applied to Parliament for a charter to establish a trans-Canada air service, I for one should be delighted to vote for it. I object to this measure in view of the fact that for a good many years we have had to vote tens of millions of dollars to meet deficits of the Canadian National Railways, and now by this Bill we are asked to authorize the company to go still further into debt. I submit that that is not good business. My honourable friend from Scarborough Junction (Hon. Mr. O'Connor) says that he and four other gentlemen are willing to invest the \$5,000,000 required for this air service. I never expect to go up in an aeroplane, for I am not air-minded, but I agree with him we are living in progressive times and it is quite right that we should have the most modern transportation conveniences.

By the Bill the Canadian National Railway Company is authorized to subscribe the capital to carry on this service. I object to the principle involved because I am opposed to Government ownership. I do not believe that either the Government or the Canadian National Railway Company could carry on this enterprise as economically as could a private company. We know very well what happened a few days ago, and what happened then will happen again if this Bill is passed: the people of Canada will put up the money.

Someone has said we have landing fields. Well, they are open to private enterprise. They were built to give employment to people