

Railway Act

distinguished hon. member for Danforth (Mr. Small) on the very graphic description he gave us of the operations of some railroad stations familiar to most of us in this house.

I rise simply to say that I have before me a concrete case which justifies the principle of this bill. In my constituency a merchant in the village of South Woodslee has written to me complaining that he understands the New York Central railroad proposes to close the railway station in his village. As a merchant, he has an appreciation of the express and freight service in that particular area, and he urges me to point out to the board of transport commissioners—as indeed I have done—the importance of not reducing this particular service. While the railroad will be afforded an opportunity of putting forward its side of the case I do think that the law should be such as to ensure that in any case of a proposed reduction in service there should be an opportunity for the public to put forward its views. For that reason I warmly support this measure.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased indeed to hear the remarks of the two previous speakers, and I would like to compliment the hon. member for Danforth (Mr. Small) for giving very good reasons why his party should support this bill.

As I have said, the purpose of this bill is to give the board the power to have an official hearing, to give people an opportunity to make their representations and to deny the right to reduce services, which power they do not have at the present time.

The correspondence I have received in this connection is in my office, but as a result of conversation in the last half hour with an official of the board of transport commissioners I might inform the house with reference to what has been said previously in this debate that I have received information that the board does not have the same power with respect to the curtailment of services to hold a hearing and to deny such curtailment as it has with respect to the abandonment of services.

Mr. Winch: May I ask the hon. member if he said this is information he has received from the board of transport commissioners during the last half hour?

Mr. Herridge: Yes, a telephone conversation. So there is obviously a misunderstanding on the part of a good many members who have spoken in this debate.

The amendment was drawn on the advice of competent counsel in my constituency and the usual advice one obtains here in order to achieve such an objective. A number of members in my opinion seemed to speak in defence

of the necessity of the C.P.R. to gain profits from their passenger runs, even though they make large profits on the freight runs. We in this group aim to represent the wishes of the people in this respect and the company having in this case a monopoly, the people should have an opportunity to be properly heard through the medium of the legislation contained in this bill.

I must say I was amazed to hear the remarks of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. McQuillan), who suggested the complete abandonment of the passenger service on the Kettle valley railroad, a railroad which hauls possibly, having regard to the mileage concerned, the greatest wealth per mile of any line in Canada. I was also very surprised to hear him correct me as to the sensibility and the ability of his colleagues in the lumber industry in my constituency. I want to say that we trust this bill will receive support from all sides of this house because we are aiming to do something we feel is to the advantage of the people of Canada.

The house divided on the motion (Mr. Herridge) which was negatived on the following division:

YEAS

Messrs:

Badanai	Howard
Batten	Leduc
Benidickson	McIraith
Boulanger	McMillan
Bourget	McWilliam
Bourque	Martin (Essex East)
Carter	Martin (Timmins)
Crestohl	Nixon
Denis	Pearson
Deschatelets	Peters
Fisher	Pickersgill
Garland	Regier
Godin	Richard (Ottawa East)
Gour	Roberge
Habel	Robichaud
Hardie	Rouleau
Herridge	Tucker
Houck	Winch—36.

NAYS

Messrs:

Aiken	Campbell
Allard	(Lambton-Kent)
Anderson	Cathers
Asselin	Chambers
Balcer	Chown
Baldwin	Churchill
Bell (Carleton)	Clancy
Bell (Saint John-Albert)	Coates
Belzile	Comtois
Bigg	Courtemanche
Bissonnette	Creaghan
Bourbonnais	Crouse
Bourdages	Danforth
Broome	Deschambault
Browne (St. John's West)	Diefenbaker
Browne (Vancouver-Kingsway)	Dorion
Cadieu	Doucett
	Drouin