

Interim Supply

Britain there is a much more adequate and efficient committee system whereby they break down into much smaller groups. Their committee work does not conflict with that of the house, and is looked on by some members as an alternative to the house. We do not have that, so in this particular argument it seems to me that the Prime Minister in a sense is doing a disservice to all hon. members who feel they have to speak. I know there are many speakers we are still waiting to hear from in this house, members in various parts of the house, and I really think that we cannot go along with the argument that it is necessary at this particular time to think about curtailing debate. I see one hon. member, the hon. member for York West, over there; I think the whole house is waiting to hear him, for reasons which are, of course, flattering to him. There are many other members in this particular parliament who have not yet had an opportunity to make their mark. Therefore, we feel that this afternoon we had somewhat of an exaggeration of the situation in so far as this house is concerned, and we should like to counsel everyone to have a little patience. If the house leader for the Liberal party and the house leader for the government are prepared to take the initiative in coming to some kind of arrangement which can be dealt with out in the open and arrived at very clearly, I know they will not go without co-operation and a spirit of friendly effort on this party's part to see if we cannot move more quickly into those items which the government seems to think are the most important.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I want to come back to earth now. I want to talk about a matter which seriously concerns 200,000 Canadians in southeastern British Columbia. I want to raise a matter on which I have spoken previously in this house, and I do not apologize for speaking on the subject again because I have been asked by various organizations in my constituency to raise this matter at the first opportunity; and this is the first opportunity. The question I wish to speak on is about a continued and improved passenger service on the Kettle valley railway. Before doing so, I want to refer to some remarks made by the hon. member for Laurier when he was chiding the government for not bringing forward legislation. Although the Columbia river treaty is mentioned in the speech from the throne, to date the government has not brought that treaty before the house for ratification. The reason it has not been brought, of course, is that they have no agreement with the government of British Columbia. It has been clearly demonstrated for months that the present government made

a great blunder when our Prime Minister went to Washington to sign that treaty prior to getting agreement with the premier of British Columbia regarding the implementation of the terms of the treaty.

Mr. Chairman, the matter about which I wish to speak is of great concern, and is a question which has been of concern since 1958, when the Canadian Pacific Railway first gave consideration to a reduction of passenger services. This passenger service in question was reduced from a standard train service between Hope, in British Columbia, and Medicine Hat, in Alberta, to a Budd car with no sleeping accommodation and no restaurant accommodation. At that time there was a general protest from all types of organizations in the constituency—chambers of commerce, trade unions, farmers organizations, municipalities. Various churches protested, and other groups of representatives in the area served between Hope and the Alberta-British Columbia border also protested. But regardless of those protests, the C.P.R. reduced this service at that time.

To indicate the concern, I just want to quote very briefly from the Nelson daily *News* of February 13, 1959. The headline is: "End to 'deplorable rail service' demanded by Nelson chamber. Public urged to tell of inconveniences suffered". The article goes on:

Nelson chamber of commerce wired transport minister Hon. George Hees and attorney general Robert Bonner Thursday requesting that immediate consideration be given the "deplorable rail service provided this area at the present time."

Then on March 3, 1960, the Nelson daily *News* again carried the headline: "Attorney general seeks Kootenay train service". In a report datelined Victoria, the following appeared:

Attorney general Bonner intends to take up again with the chairman of the board of transport commissioners the question of renewal of full-time train service through the Doukhobor areas of the Kootenays, he told the legislature Wednesday night.

The minister replied to Kootenay member questioners in the house that the province had offered to pay a third of the cost up to \$50,000 of railway protection through the Doukhobor area, providing the federal government and the C.P.R. absorbed the other two thirds.

The board of transport commissioners had promised to make an order compelling the C.P.R. to restore full service "if we would guarantee the safety of the trains."

The "we" that is the government of British Columbia.

After having suffered that reduced passenger service since 1959 the C.P.R. has made application to the board of transport commissioners to abandon passenger service on the Kettle Valley railway, a service which serves, as I mentioned before, a population of nearly 200,000 people in south eastern British

[Mr. Fisher.]