

Vehicular Parts

speak, and so allow this most important subject to be referred to the committee on agriculture.

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have an opportunity to speak on this bill this afternoon. There can be no question that this matter is of great concern to the farmers of this country, so I congratulate the hon. member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Nesdoly) for bringing it before the House. If I had time, I would go into some detail as to whether this problem is more properly dealt with by the federal government or by the provincial governments.

This bill seeks to guarantee a supply of farm machinery parts for a period of ten years. This is an important aspect of the whole problem of spare parts for farm machinery, but equally important is the problem of servicing and providing those parts on a speedy basis when breakdowns occur. Many of us go to farm meetings and hear about the problem of being unable to get spare parts almost on demand, especially during the harvest season when there are many machinery breakdowns and there is a regional or provincial problem in obtaining speedy delivery of spare parts.

At the meeting of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture held last February in Saskatoon, the following resolution was passed concerning farm machinery repairs:

(a) That retailers keep a sufficient parts inventory to make possible the quick repair of farm machinery, especially during rush periods.

(b) That farm machinery parts and repair services be offered to farmers during the weekends deemed necessary and during lunch hours.

(c) That there be more standardization of parts in the farm machinery industry.

(d) That individual machinery repair parts be made available rather than having to purchase an entire unit.

In addition, a farm machinery committee was established. Its terms of reference include the development of a comparative evaluation of machinery manufacturers—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I appreciate that the hon. member was making a most interesting speech, but it is six o'clock and the Chair must advise the House that the time assigned for the consideration of private members' business has expired.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

[Mr. Knight.]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS AND AIR CANADA**PROVISION FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES AND GUARANTEEING OF SECURITIES AND DEBENTURES**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-5, an act to authorize the provision of moneys to meet certain capital expenditures of the Canadian National Railways system and Air Canada for the period from the 1st day of January, 1973, to the 30th day of June, 1974, and to authorize the guarantee by Her Majesty of certain securities to be issued by the Canadian National Railway Company and certain debentures to be issued by Air Canada, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Verdun): Mr. Speaker, just before the supper break I rose to participate briefly in the debate. I propose to comment on this bill and on some of the observations of the hon. member for Mississauga (Mr. Blenkarn). Passage of Bill C-5 has been delayed for some time. Members of the House have the right to delay passage of a bill; nonetheless, this has proved to be an embarrassment both to the CNR and to Air Canada because, no matter what some members may think, these companies are entitled to funds for financing. Members, of course, may question that financing.

It seems to me that we were given ample opportunity in committee, under the able chairmanship of the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner), to investigate these matters and question officials of the CNR and Air Canada on various aspects of the operations of both corporations. I do not want to debate with the hon. member the Air Canada-Wardair transaction which he mentioned this afternoon—whether Air Canada is paying too much or not enough for 30 per cent of Wardair shares, or whether they should pay 30 times, 15 times, or 10 times earnings. It boils down to how one defines earnings. Do we mean earnings after depreciation, or before; earnings declared for income tax, or for the purpose of corporate tax?

I think the hon. gentleman would agree that this is not the real issue. Unintentionally, I am sure, the hon. gentleman implied that Air Canada agreed to pay to Wardair considerably more than it had to pay. Perhaps I read more into the hon. gentleman's speech than he intended. He is an able debater and I am sure he did not mean to intimate that, even unintentionally.

The fundamental question is, should Air Canada be buying into Wardair at all? What may not have been said—I do not know, since I have not listened to or read every speech made in this debate—is that before entering into this financial arrangement with Wardair, Air Canada obtained the best possible advice from acknowledged experts in the field. Certainly this was mentioned forcefully in the standing committee when this matter was considered during the last session.

The question is, what is Air Canada receiving in return for its investment in Wardair? It is not whether Air Canada paid a fair price. A fair price is a matter of