

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

That is why I am appealing once again to the government authorities. I take this opportunity to urge them to show a bit more imagination and to take into account certain recommendations which could be quickly applied, recommendations made by worthwhile organizations, constantly interested in public safety. So, once again, I am asking the new Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer) who might take this opportunity, since he is taking on new responsibilities, to give this problem serious consideration and to invent solutions, if he can. I ask him also to make the most of the fact that the former minister, the hon. Mr. Pickersgill, who also showed special interest in these questions when they were brought to his attention, has now become president of the transport commission.

So, Mr. Speaker, counting on the dispatch and the attention of government authorities, I think it is important to show some imagination in the field of public safety in view of the fact that these turbo-trains will surely create problems that will have to be faced.

[English]

Mr. J. A. Byrne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think I must take this occasion to compliment my hon. friend for his tenacity in pursuing this question of safety at railway level crossings. He was concerned about this matter long before the tragic accident at Dorion and I am sure that since he raised this subject on April 18 of this year greater attention has been paid by the C.N.R. in its planning for the implementation of the turbo-train between Montreal and Toronto.

A great deal of consideration has been given to this matter by the officials and the research committee of Canadian National Railways throughout the last several years. The hon. member mentioned that the former minister of transport interested himself a great deal in this question and it goes without saying that in his new position as president of the enlarged transport commission he will have this matter foremost in his mind. I am sure that he, together with our new and energetic Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer), will make a combination which will solve this very serious problem.

• (10:20 p.m.)

The introduction of high speed trains will undoubtedly bring additional hazards. I think I said the last time this question was debated that it is unthinkable that we should leave an unguarded railway crossing, or for that

matter an unguarded railway line, when trains will reach such high speeds as 120 or 150 miles an hour. I am sure that what the hon. member is doing will bring this more forcibly to the attention of the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson), the government and the public at large, and again I want to congratulate him for his earnest attention to this matter.

PUBLIC SERVICE—LEGISLATION TO INCREASE PENSIONS OF RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS

Hon. R. A. Bell (Carleton): Mr. Speaker, tonight on the subject of increases in pensions for retired public servants I speak rather crossly but very deliberately. With other hon. members of the house I have tried to achieve my objective by quiet persuasion and firm argument, but unsuccessfully. I confess to you, sir, that my patience with the government's unbelievable procrastination with respect to increases for retired public servants, members of the armed forces and the R.C.M.P. is totally exhausted.

Mr. Knowles: Hear, hear.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): On this subject my mood has shifted from expectation to exasperation, to indignation, and then to anger. This is not a matter of partisanship in any way whatever. On the record are all the efforts of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), of the hon. member for Ottawa East (Mr. Richard), of other hon. members and of myself to compel action on the part of the government.

What I cannot discover, what I am unable to understand is how to get the members of this dawdling, supine, slumbering, pottering ministry to take a simple, ordinary, straightforward decision—yes or no. The answer the government must give to the unanimous, and I stress unanimous, recommendation of the special joint committee on the public service that there be increases in pensions for retired public servants and equivalent persons is just that—either yes or no.

If it is yes, then bring in the legislation; do it now, and we will pass it in 24 hours or less. If it is no, then treat us as common sense persons and stop beating around the bush with silly evasions about "active consideration," "immediate study," "deep concern," "in due course" and other such sophistries and platitudes which relieve no hardship, and believe me, Mr. Speaker, there are many hardships on the part of retired public servants.