

attempted to work a schedule into Brandon and Yorkton and eastern Saskatchewan. This has never been entirely satisfactory and frequent delays, late arrival of planes or no planes at all at times, and no service on weekends, all contributed to damage the reputation of reliability that would have been necessary to make the airline route a viable enterprise.

The approval on October 1 by the CTC of the application of TransAir to drop their Dauphin run has set back the possibility of this community having a reliable air outlet. It is my understanding that in 1966, when the government declared a regional air policy, it was recognized that regional airlines would at times be flying routes on which they would be losing money, but they were to be compensated by the allocation of enough profitable lines to allow them to make a reasonable profit and provide service.

The departure of TransAir from my community means that 60,000 people live more than 100 miles, and many more than 200 and 300 miles, from an airport with scheduled flights. These people pay their share of taxes, and we in Canada support various transportation systems, including Air Canada, with massive sums of money paid out of the federal treasury. We all recognize that this bill is designed to allow Air Canada to purchase aircraft ultimately at the taxpayers' expense, and the cost does not amount to a few hundred thousand dollars but to hundreds of millions of dollars. If the country at large is going to have a subsidized air service, then small communities should have some share and some reasonable service for this public largesse.

The CTC should take into consideration the fact that regional air carriers must have enough profitable lines to carry some unprofitable ones, or there should be some direct assistance given to airlines to maintain service in rural areas. The subsidy method, I understand, has been used to help regional airlines in Quebec and the Maritimes to service some communities. A similar attitude should prevail in the west in some cases. Air service to Dauphin and Brandon and the rest of western Manitoba has been poor. I believe this can also be said of Yorkton and other parts of eastern Saskatchewan. Recognition of their problem is past overdue and immediate action is necessary if the people who live in large sections of rural western Manitoba, and perhaps eastern Saskatchewan, are to have some reasonable air service. Although these people may be scattered, in total they do represent many hundreds of thousands.

I believe that the regional air policy has been productive. I think other airlines that have taken over Air Canada runs are providing good service. Air transport seems to lend itself to competition among many small companies, although the safety factors must be controlled. In essence, I think the government must look at all the services that are supplied to the regions of this country and ensure that all areas receive reasonable service, so that people do not find themselves hundreds of miles from an airport that has a scheduled passenger service.

● (2130)

[Translation]

Mr. Eymard Corbin (Madawaska-Victoria): Mr. Speaker, the few remarks I wish to make tonight will be fairly

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brief, indeed I believe I could deal within a short time with the few points I would like to make.

Since the beginning of this debate, a good many members have dealt with Canadian Pacific management and said one could be proud of it. I noticed also the numerous discrepancies in this House whenever we discuss bills on the means of financing the Canadian National Railways.

On the one hand capitalists in this House say: How is it that the CNR cannot be administered as well as the CPR? They answer: CNR management is inefficient. Let us put that company in the hands of private corporations which will make them produce to the benefit of all Canadians. On the other hand, socialists invariably say that we should at all costs nationalize the Canadian Pacific Railway because they are making profits. That a private company should make profits and even succeed in extinguishing their debts, contrarily to the CNR, that makes no sense.

There is obviously an element of truth on both sides. Undoubtedly, there are many reasons for deep reforms in that field, but beyond great perturbation, there is a daily fact one cannot ignore, it is that of experience. As a matter of fact, in the public as a whole, whose opinion we all reflect in this House, there is a general dissatisfaction with the services provided by either railway company. Railway employees on the whole are dissatisfied with their working conditions and the strike and recent strike threats speak volumes on that. People will say that the unions will settle their problems eventually. Yes, but after how many hardships, how many weeks and months of negotiations, to get finally less than half of what was hoped for.

I said that it was in the ordinary everyday relationships between an employee and railway companies that we have succeeded in forming a fairly accurate opinion about the quality of the service or of the management.

A few years ago, the area which I have represented in the House of Commons for nearly six years lost a passenger train service which we then considered as quite adequate, following an epic struggle involving private citizens, groups and associations, as well as unions.

As a matter of fact, we were trying to obtain service improvements when the Canadian National Railways announced its unilateral decision to abolish the service given by the passenger train known as the "Ocean Limited", that is to remove it from the Moncton-Edmunston-Montreal line in order that it may go to Montreal via Campbellton. The service which has since replaced it is far from satisfactory, so that it is unthinkable for me, for instance, as a member of Parliament, to use it to get to my riding or to return to the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, I still keep the pass given by authority of the Canadian Parliament to senators and members of Parliament, in case of a very urgent situation which would prevent me from using other means of transport. I have no intention of using this pass and I have used it only once, I think, since the removal of the "Ocean Limited", in particularly trying circumstances. I do not intend to use it again and keep it strictly for my souvenir album.

If, in the future, I have to use again the CN passenger trains I will pay cash without claiming any reimbursement. I must confess that when I get angry about the CNR