

*Branch Railway Lines*

ing industry to subsidize the C.N.R. To act otherwise would be to destroy initiative and personal ambition and to remove any incentive to expand on the part of such a vast sector of private enterprise as the trucking industry. That is inadmissible.

If the government feels rich enough to give subsidies, I have no objection but let it subsidize all transport companies so as to prevent any unfair and underhanded competition at the expense of part of our society.

Second, we have before us at this time a resolution concerning the railroad industry. When looking through the order paper we find that there are other resolutions concerning the railways—No. 51, for instance, relating to the Canadian National Railways.

I am asking the minister whether—as there are various bills concerning the C.N.R. to be introduced, one of which concerning the recapitalization of the C.N.R. debt, which might be considered simultaneously—it would not be possible to submit or introduce all those bills immediately? We might pass all those resolutions very quickly and refer them all to the committee, to proceed with a study of Canadian railway matters, which hardly can be made bit by bit, or piecemeal, but by considering the railway problem as a whole. Suggestions and recommendations would then be made concerning not one specific area of railroading, but the overall aspect of those problems which complete each other and are interconnected, as in the case of the recapitalization of the C.N.R. debt, which is certainly directly linked with the proposed subsidies to meet the deficits which may be incurred in some respects.

Under resolution No. 51, there is a question of financial claims by the C.N.R. We find a similar claim under No. 35. Could the Minister of Transport not immediately move resolution No. 51? It might then perhaps be passed more quickly than the resolution now before us.

Then we would refer all that to the committee on railways and the members could thus examine the over-all problems and submit a more comprehensive solution. This would certainly be more satisfying to the railways as well as to the members, who could study those problems all at once.

Hence I submit, and I believe everybody would agree to this, that once this resolution has been adopted, we should deal with all the other resolutions dealing with the national railways, and which are all concerned with related problems, so as to enable the members to have an over-all outlook and to make a more intensive study of all those problems.

[Mr. Grégoire.]

Third, and it is my last suggestion, or rather the one before the last, reference is made to the abandonment of railway lines, especially in the west. There is something peculiar about that. I wonder whether we could not obtain retroactivity in that field? I say this because in the province of Quebec, the abandonment of railway lines program has already been carried out.

That program has been completed for some ten years. If you take the line from Quebec to Ste Anne de Beaupré and Baie St. Paul, you realize that that line has been eliminated for several years. That abandonment of railway lines program has been completed. But when the time comes to abandon railway lines in the west or in Ontario, well the decision is taken to proceed in such a way as not to affect those regions.

Yet, as far as the province of Quebec is concerned, a program of abandonment of railway lines was adopted first and then carried out. But as regards the west and Ontario, things were postponed and principles are brought up. There is even a plan to assist cities, which was not done in the province of Quebec.

Could there not be some kind of retroactivity in order to assist the province of Quebec in that field as it is done in the rest of the country. We are not asking for the same amounts, but for some retroactivity for Quebec, the same benefits as are given the other provinces in establishing this program of abandonment of uneconomic railway lines.

I think it could be done. I suggest that the minister should try it.

The fourth and last recommendation I should like to submit to the minister is perhaps of less importance than the preceding ones. I was looking forward for the opportunity to make it today and I am availing myself of it now. In concluding, I would like to submit it to him. Certain innovations have appeared in the national railways. Some of them were good and some others were not as good and not as successful. The opportunity seems well at hand for me to make this recommendation to the minister.

It is because electronic kitchens have been installed on some C.N.R. trains. Everything is cooked in 30 seconds but it is just not fit to eat. Therefore, I wonder if one must prefer inferior food, less expensive and prepared more quickly, to better tasting and healthier food. Therefore, I wonder if the minister could not take this opportunity to forward those recommendations to the president of the C.N.R.