

• (3:20 p.m.)

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

PROVISION FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES, GUARANTEEING OF SECURITIES

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (for Mr. Benson) moved that Bill C-186, 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, 1970, to the 30th day of June, 1971, and to authorize the guarantee by Her Majesty of certain securities to be issued by the Canadian National Railways Company and certain debentures to be issued by Air Canada, as reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, be concurred in.

• Motion agreed to.

Mr. MacEachen (for Mr. Benson) moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I think there is general feeling that the bill might be disposed of at this stage. There is a certain undertaking with regard to a committee on which this hinges; it was discussed with the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) in committee. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) may wish to outline to the House the particulars of that arrangement.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) has taken the words out of my mouth. However, that does not deter me from repeating them, does it?

Mr. MacEachen: It never has in the past.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): When this bill was under consideration by the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) made three commitments. It was understood that if these commitments were confirmed, there would be no objection to the bill being passed at the third reading stage without further debate. The three commitments were a reference of the capital structure of the Canadian National Railways, a device under which the officials of the Canadian National Railways could be called before that committee and a device under which the officials of Air Canada could also be called before that committee. I agree with the hon. member for Peace River that it would be nice to have these commitments on the record of *Hansard*.

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) has said substantially what I wanted to say. When the bill was before the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications I did not have an opportunity to examine the minister. The minister gave the undertaking which I would have tried to extract from him if I had been there, that is, to call before that committee the senior officials of Canadian National Railways and Air Canada. It is only

Canada Development Corporation

with that understanding that I am prepared to allow the bill to be given third reading at this time.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): In connection with the first point, Mr. Speaker, namely, reference of the capital structure of the CNR, I undertook to give that assurance to the House some time ago. I repeat it. There will be no difficulty on that point. With respect to the device to enable the officials of the Canadian National Railways and Air Canada to appear before the committee, there will be no difficulty on that point; we will certainly undertake to make that possible.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): And no doubt it will be supported in the committee.

Mr. Speaker: The motion has been put. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

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CANADA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PROVISION FOR ESTABLISHMENT, OBJECTS, POWERS, CAPITALIZATION, ETC.

The House resumed from Tuesday, February 23, consideration of the motion of Mr. Benson that Bill C-219 to establish the Canada Development Corporation, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Saltsman (p. 3648).

• (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): It occurs to me, Mr. Speaker, that there has never been a time in the history of Canada when the efforts of backbenchers have been as unrewarding as they are today both in terms of individual satisfaction and in terms of service to those voters who supported them.

The way in which backbenchers on the other side of the House leap up to speak in favour of every piece of legislation proposed by their leader makes me believe they would not dare do anything else. To judge from their behaviour one would suppose that every bill presented by the government is perfect in all respects, yet all of us here know there is not even a remote possibility that the government will ever put forward a bill which is perfect in all respects.

I am mystified by the manner in which every bill sponsored by the government is accepted by backbenchers across the way as if it had been passed into legislation even before it had been debated. There has never been a time in history when dissent has been more fashionable, yet never a word of dissent is spoken from the benches opposite against the steady erosion of the powers of Parliament by the government they support. At a time when dissent is virtually the order of the day, there is never a word of dissent forthcoming from mem-