

*Government Orders*

• (1010)

The role of the Chair is not to judge the nature of or the necessity for such communication. The Chair is strictly limited to examining cases where the role or dignity of Parliament may be diminished and to take whatever action is necessary to keep that from happening.

In the case before us the Chair finds that the role of Parliament has been duly acknowledged, and that there is no affront to the dignity of the House.

I thank hon. members for their contribution to this particular matter.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### RAILWAY ACT

#### MEASURE TO AMEND

The House proceeded to consideration of Bill C-5, an act to amend the Railway Act, as reported (without amendment) from a legislative committee.

**Hon. Bill McKnight (for the Minister of Transport)** moved that the bill be concurred in.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. McKnight (for the Minister of Transport)** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Ross Belsher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, this bill was last debated on Friday morning, January 26, when there were not many more people in the House than there are here this morning. Nonetheless, there are many of the same faces who are vitally interested in this piece of legislation.

I just want to take a few moments to thank the legislative committee for its work under the able chairmanship of the hon. member for Peterborough and the other members who sat on the committee, and also to read into the record the names of communities that wrote in an submission.

The county of Camrose, the village of Donalda, the village of Edberg, the village of Big Valley and the

county of Stettler will ring a bell in your heart, Mr. Speaker. I can see a smile on your face already as you recognize them. I have never been to any of those places, but knowing the size of them it reminds me of where I was born and raised back on the prairies myself.

What we have before us today in third reading is a piece of legislation that amends two sections of the National Transportation Act. That act was passed in 1987. We are aware of a single company on which it has an effect, that is the Central Western Railway. For this reason we want to pass it today and send it on to the other place so that it will be brought into conformity with the National Transportation Act.

I am sure my hon. friends opposite will have comments to make on this piece of legislation.

**Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte):** Mr. Speaker, I too want speak for a few moments on Bill C-5.

The parliamentary secretary is correct. We had a good, constructive session of the legislative committee on this bill. The work of the committee was undertaken in a responsible fashion.

Canadians should understand that Bill C-5 applies to one short line railway company in Canada, the Central Western Railway company. It applies to no other railway company. More to the point, in future this bill will have no implication for any other railway company in Canada.

The Central Western Railway, located in Alberta, is the only railway company which through the luck of the draw is not part of the new provisions contained in the National Transportation Act provisions for short line railways. That is because the Central Western Railway came into being before the NTA was passed. Henceforth, all short line railways will be treated in an identical fashion. Because of the luck of the draw and getting out of the gate early, previous to 1987, those regulations for short line railways do not apply, that is the jurisdiction does not apply to the Central Western Railway.

All this bill attempts to do is to treat this company in exactly the same fashion as every other short line railway in Canada. We could have a debate in the House about the evolution of short line railways. We could have a philosophical discussion in the House about whether or not the evolution of short line railways is a good or bad thing, but that is another question. Given that we have a set of regulations that apply to all other short line railways, should one company be treated differently? I think it is the conclusion of sensible members of the