

Committee on Railways and Shipping

of pension to which he is entitled is \$25 or more. These difficulties apply all across the field of pensions and fixed incomes which come from annuities and other sources where there is no possibility of change regardless of the movement that might take place in the purchasing power of the dollar.

I should like to touch a little bit more particularly on the question of the contrast between pensions of the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific Railway. I do not wish to do so at any length because I do not think that is a question relevant to the motion. However, as the question has been raised, I do think I should try to dispose of it summarily. The principal point which I think must be borne in mind is that the pension plan of the Canadian Pacific Railway is not truly comparable to that of the Canadian National Railways. The C.P.R. pension plan has been compulsorily contributory since January 1, 1937. The Canadian National pension plan has been voluntarily contributory since January 1, 1935. Under the Canadian Pacific plan the entry age limit is 40 years whereas under the Canadian National plan it is 45 years. This means that a person who worked full time for the Canadian Pacific Railway from age 41 would receive no pension whereas in similar circumstances a Canadian National employee would receive a pension of \$25 per month without making any contributions and the amount would be substantially greater if he contributed.

So far as pensions are concerned, Mr. Speaker, I shall merely speak from memory. So far as the Canadian Pacific Railway is concerned it is my impression that its total outlay for pensions is in the neighbourhood of \$17 million a year; so far as the Canadian National Railways is concerned, I see from the 1954 accounts that the total expenditure slightly exceeded \$25 million.

Mr. Knowles: Has the minister the comparable figures as to the number of persons to whom those pensions are paid?

Mr. Marler: No, Mr. Speaker, I do not think I should answer the question in just that way because I do not think these amounts I have referred to represent the pensions paid by the railways direct. I think these are the contributions of the railways to pension plans and do not take account of the sums that are paid by the pension funds to beneficiaries. I am merely referring to the burden, because that is what it is, of the two railway companies for pensions. As I said, the figure for the Canadian Pacific Railway was approximately \$17 million and for the Canadian National for 1954 it was slightly more than \$25 million.

Mr. Knowles: It is true, is it not, that the Canadian National is the larger organization?

Mr. Marler: Yes. I think if my hon. friend would do the arithmetic he would find that the two figures bear a very close relationship, more or less, to the total employment in the Canadian National system and the Canadian Pacific system.

So far as Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships are concerned, I should like to correct the impression given by the hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Johnston) that the company is operating only three rather miserable ships. That statement has no relation whatever to the facts of the matter. The company is actually operating eight vessels. I have had the opportunity of seeing some of them and I think they are good ships for their class.

This last year particularly the company has been following a very aggressive policy in an endeavour to secure as much business as it possibly can for its ships. It spent some substantial sums of money on the installation of additional refrigeration equipment in some of these vessels. There was not time to carry out the whole program but I am sure hon. members will be interested to know that this was translated into a demand for space for Canadian fruit, particularly for Nova Scotia apples, which far exceeded what was available. I look upon this as a most encouraging sign. While I have not the actual figures before me for the operations last year I feel perfectly sure that when hon. members see the results they will be gratified by the improvement which has taken place in the last twelve months.

Since the special committee met last year we have been giving careful consideration to what ought to be done with regard to the future operations of the company. I hope that by the time the committee sits it will be possible for me to make a statement on the subject and to set at rest any doubts there may be as to the future operation of this service. I am not in a position to do that today but I hope to be able to do it at an early date.

I should like to say something on the subject of the so-called Trans-Canada Air Lines monopoly about which a number of hon. members have spoken today. I do not think the time available would permit me to deal with this subject exhaustively, but I do not think I should let the occasion go by and leave on the record the view expressed by a number of hon. members, particularly those belonging to the Progressive Conservative party, as to the desirability of establishing competitive services for T.C.A. I take it of