

Mr. Speaker, if I spring from some kind of establishment, let it be from a class of people who have always lived by the sweat of their brows, and I am not forgetting it. That is the reason why I am interested in Bill C-47.

At different times during previous sessions, I have put on the order paper a certain number of questions on CN train derailments. Each and everytime I have been provided with incomplete and absolutely unsatisfactory answers. Therefore, it is with pleasure that I welcome the suggestion contained in this bill to the effect that all accidents involving damages amounting to \$1,500 or more to equipment and tracks be made the subject of compulsory reports to the Canadian Transport Commission.

With the implementation of new railroad technology in Canada especially during the fifties, the railway companies have done away with some of the supervisory and checking practices which were considered elementary during the steam-engine era. I do not mean by that there were fewer derailments in the past, I just say that they had apparently better means of control and more adequate and more human methods to prevent accidents.

The machines have replaced men in many ways, but they are not perfect. I especially recall some Christmas holidays in the early fifties when my father had hired me to shovel snow and check tracks which I did walking alongside of a full-time employee. For a week the thermometer must have registered some 20 or 30 degrees below zero and we had to cover a distance of three miles in order to survey each track, each joint, to ascertain that the cold had not caused any damage which could impede traffic.

• (4:50 p.m.)

To my knowledge, this is not done anymore, although it might be better otherwise.

Some railway employees in my riding were telling me that every winter they fear to go on board when it is cold. They feel the rolling stock and the roadbeds are not under adequate inspection, therefore, derailments often occur.

Excessive heat obviously can also twist the tracks. There is among railway employees a feeling that a larger staff should be detailed for the inspection of the rolling stock and the roadbeds. Surely, Mr. Speaker, considering the high unemployment we are experiencing at the present time, the railway companies of this country should be hiring more staff in order to satisfy the security requirements.

My colleague, the hon. member for Portneuf (Mr. Godin), who also agrees with us on this matter, had asked a series of questions and he received answers which show that closer inspection by an additional number of employees would help reduce derailments and other accidents.

I will quote a few figures regarding the Chaleur area of CN on derailments. In 1967, derailments caused considerable losses: \$25,000 at Saint-Quentin on January 2,

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\$14,000 at Monk on February 19; a smaller incident at Caraquez nevertheless cost \$2,000. A much more serious derailment at Monk on March 4 resulted in damages to the extent of \$150,000. On March 18 of the same year a derailment at Napadogan cost \$319,000.

And I think those figures cover only losses in rolling stock or in railway tracks. They do not include losses of goods or working days.

A mere look at the situation shows that it is serious and I hope that in the near future the necessary steps will be taken to improve our protection system for railway men and also for the equipment which they must handle.

The principle of the bill is most acceptable. There always seems to be a difficulty for members when it comes to referring a bill to a committee. In this case, I would certainly be willing to refer the matter to the committee so that it may be discussed more openly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): Order. The hour set aside for consideration of private members' business has now expired. As it is five o'clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday at 2 p.m.

[*English*]

This beautiful week we have had of sunny weather, buds, greenery and beautiful tulips leaves me in only one position. I must recall at least a few lines of one of the greatest and earliest poets. Possibly a few members remember John Milton of the seventeenth century, who wrote:

Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
Mirth and youth and warm desire!
Woods and groves are of thy dressing
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing,
Thus—we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

I wish all members a very happy weekend. I hope they will enjoy the tulip festival by walking through our parks and along our riversides. I hope they will not only enjoy health but the satisfaction of a good time.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. MacLean: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the government House leader to confirm that the business for the beginning of next week will be the same as announced yesterday. In other words, will the first order of business on Monday be Bill C-238, an act to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act.

Mr. Francis: Yes, Mr. Speaker; I think the hon. member has correctly described it. The business will be as stated at page 5777 of *Hansard*.

At five o'clock the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.