

ry, so that there would be public hearings in every instance.

It would seem to me, however, that many applications for meaningful and useful assistance will be made under the provisions of this legislation, and not all of them by any stretch of the imagination will require public inquiries. Indeed, the process of establishing the mechanics of a public inquiry might in some cases unduly delay the issue. So rather than have this made mandatory, I wish the minister might have built in a provision for an inquiry to be made on the part of people who might be affected. I cannot help but say, perhaps just in passing but fairly seriously, that the Minister of Transport, and indeed even his delightful and charming parliamentary secretary, while sometimes agreeing with me, on many occasions are not prepared to do anything about ideas that are presented. They have not really demonstrated any enthusiasm in respect of the transportation needs of Canada. Perhaps that will change shortly, but there is no enthusiasm. That is a somewhat startling admission regarding those who have had a degree of absolute control over that area for long periods of time. But I think even the parliamentary secretary would admit that there are times when he himself is not enthusiastic, even though we are chiding him for being the only live spokesman for the department. The department has run out of steam; it has given no leadership. We have been waiting for this piece of legislation, as the provinces have been waiting for it, for ten years now, and the government asks us to approve it with enthusiasm when we know they will turn it over to a body which operates within their parameters and reports to them. But there is no steam there either; there is no energy. I do not think even Geratol will help the chairman of that commission. There is no demonstrated reason why we should express other than respect for the measure that is in front of us and a deep concern for the commission, the body that will administer it.

● (2130)

As I say, we praise the principle of the bill, but its implementation and effective administration cause me some concern, as I am sure they do many thousands of Canadians. I commend my colleague, the hon. member for Central Nova, for the remarks he made here this afternoon. This is indeed an interesting bill. One aspect of it is that it seems to bring together several ministries of the Crown.

Perhaps I should stress again the need for the government to assure us that as the body behind this piece of legislation they will accept some responsibility with regard to the attitude of the CTC to the implementation of the provisions of this bill. The government should perk them up a little bit and get them working. Good God, a few mistakes once in a while are nothing compared with the work that can be achieved. It would be a welcome and refreshing thing to most of us in this chamber compared with their track record in recent years, which has shown them to be somewhat less than useful, at least as far as I am concerned.

Obviously the commission will have to do better in the future, but they will not do better unless the government spurs them on. My colleague, the hon. member for Calgary North, earlier asked who runs the country. It seems to me

Relocation of Railway Lines

that it is the CNR in these times. Obviously the CNR do not care about the CTC and they have never given a damn about the government. So I am not all that happy with the administrative mechanics behind this legislation, or with the demonstrated enthusiasm on the part of the CTC, indeed the absence of it on the part of the government, to make sure that the provisions of this bill are not only administered but administered with some imagination and enthusiasm. The government should ensure that this legislation does not bog down in some corner of somebody's back filing drawer, but rather that it is used to the extent that the provinces and municipalities require to correct some serious situations that have existed for many years and that worsen each year as property values go up.

Let the government take hold of the CNR and of the CTC and let them know once in a while that this chamber and they as the government do have some concern about the way in which these two bodies go about administering this act. When the government do this, some people on this side of the House will let them have the type of support that is required for the meaningful implementation of the provisions of this bill. For many of us this will mean a long overdue but very welcome involvement in work in our own communities.

We welcome this bill, Mr. Chairman, but I request of the government that they make absolutely certain that the administrative body is shaken up a little bit. Let the government point out to them the necessity for a more vigorous approach to the massive problems that they must tackle under the provisions of this legislation and make sure that they do so with some enthusiasm.

Mr. McKenzie: Mr. Chairman, earlier today I spoke in support of this bill, and now I would like to ask the minister two questions. I have a copy of the Winnipeg railway study which covers a number of aspects of rail line relocation with regard to the economic benefits and the social and environmental impact of such. I should like to quote from a letter from the Damas Smith consulting firm in the city of Winnipeg. They refer to CP Rail and say: "The railway has acquired land south of the main line". However, they do not say how far south. If they go as far south as they can, they will go up to Saskatchewan Avenue which is adjacent to residential property. They say:

The railway has acquired land south of the main line between the Perimeter Highway and the Airport for a new classification yard. It will probably build this yard.

As I stated this afternoon, CPR has been acquiring property adjacent to residential property. I should like to ask the minister: What protection will the city have in this situation?

Mr. Basford: Mr. Chairman, I want to make it clear to the hon. member that I am not familiar with all the details of the Winnipeg proposals because I have not had to familiarize myself with them. The hon. member asks what kind of protection would be provided under this legislation. First, the initiation of the relocation proposal must come from the municipality or province. That is very clear in this legislation. They are the applicants to the CTC. They put together an urban development plan and a transportation plan on the basis of studies and work, and they