

*Canadian National Railways*

who will get off and wait for the next flight. This is the type of service we get from the computer system and this is one reason for the trouble in which airlines find themselves today.

Many airports in Canada can accommodate small aircraft of the type Air Canada will apparently be operating in five years. These airports should be servicing air transportation to many communities. Obviously they cannot accommodate the stretched DC-8 jet. We should have better air service. If we are to improve the service we should not start by subsidizing the kind of service now in existence. Let us bring all the airlines in Canada under one agency to provide the best service possible. We have only 21 million people in this country, yet we probably have more internal flight routes than any other country with the exception of Russia. We cannot carry on the type of air service the people of Canada demand, with the proliferation of airlines that we have. We should not have an increasing number of regional routes.

Having in mind this entire transportation problem, we must look at the over-all picture. There is no more logical time to look at transportation in Canada than now, when we are discussing the finances of Canadian National Railways. Last year every Canadian paid \$2 in subsidy to this system. Most of these Canadians could not go down to the station and buy a ticket on a train because a train did not run through the local station. The government can play around, as it obviously does, but it will eventually have to face up to the need for efficient transportation in this country. Perhaps it will not face up to this problem on an over-all basis, but I am sure the people will not wait much longer before raising a great fuss. They will not wait until trains Nos. 7 and 8 are taken off, and they will not wait until the transcontinental passenger service is done away with before making a fuss about the system.

I think we should sit down and design a new transportation facility for the rural areas which will meet the conditions of the 1970s. Hopefully, we will be smart enough to develop the kind of transportation policy which is required to meet the needs of the 1980s. I suggest that rail travel in Canada will be required for years. Air transportation will become more important as the years go by, but we will find that as air transportation increases there will be a resurgence of need for ground transportation. This will represent an economic means of transportation to the major centres of population.

• (9:10 p.m.)

We will need that kind of transportation and we in parliament are not doing anything about it. We are letting the CNR make small deals and arrangements where they say, "Never mind the nine people. We will be working toward efficiency. We will drop these people or move them to a major centre and thus provide a better service". If I am being billed for freight that I have received, I as a consumer am not really interested whether my account comes from Capreol or from Toronto, and I am not really interested whether I get it this week, next week or even next month. I think that CN economists are

[Mr Peters.]

not producing anything for the Canadian people and they are certainly not reducing the size of the debt that we are discussing.

**Mr. Ambrose Hubert Peddle (Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador):** Mr. Speaker, the CNR and Air Canada are asking Parliament to approve, according to my calculations, some \$500 million to take care of the service that they intend to offer to the Canadian nation in the next year or so. I find it difficult to think nationally, for two reasons. The first is that Newfoundland has only been part of the Canadian nation for 21 years, and the second is that we have so many problems in Newfoundland that they tend to occupy our full time. So I will speak very briefly on the CNR and Air Canada as their services relate to Newfoundland.

My opinion of how these services treat Canada's newest province is already on the record. I spoke in the same debate last year and the year before, when the whole matter was regarded pretty unanimously as a joke. But I think the message is getting through to many of our colleagues, including many of our Liberal colleagues who at that time did not regard the matter too seriously, that these Crown corporations are using us as guinea pigs and that now the sore is festering all across Canada. As I said, I am on record in the House as well as at the meetings of the Committee on Transport and Communications and in the files of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson).

In Newfoundland today, as everybody is aware, there is no rail passenger service. But we have a bus service which in no way fills the need for public transportation. The bus service is not safe—this has been proven; it is not comfortable—which anybody who has driven any distance can attest to; and it is certainly not dependable—which can be affirmed by many people who set out on Wednesday and did not get to their destination on Friday and maybe not even then.

After a couple of years of operation, this service does not even offer the amenity of a drink of cold water during the course of a 550-mile journey. I would not like to be accused of making puns or playing on words, but I do not think it would be unfair for me to say that the evidence is piling up that this service is not suited to the travel needs of Newfoundlanders, at least during the winter months. To substantiate my point that the evidence is piling up, I have here a press story of April, 1969, with a picture which shows the Expedo, the cream of the crop of the CN bus transportation service in Newfoundland, lying on its side, almost over on its back, over a six-foot embankment. That happened within a month or so of the commencement of the bus service. The driver cannot be blamed. The story says:

A spokesman for the RCMP said the bus apparently met another vehicle while rounding a turn in the highway and in swerving to miss the other vehicle slipped off the road and overturned down a six-foot embankment. It was snowing at the time.

There is lots of snow in Newfoundland and there are lots of curves and embankments. However, this is not the only example and it makes me fear for the safety of the many Newfoundlanders who are using this