

general concurrence, was that the balance sheet of Trans-Canada Air Lines could be discussed at that time.

Mr. ISNOR: I am in accord with the general principle expressed by the leader of the opposition. In addition to this sum of more than \$85,000,000 we should not grant a further unknown amount. However this is only the resolution stage, and in virtue of the explanation given by the parliamentary assistant, that every year the Canadian National Railways must return to parliament for an amount to cover their deficits, we might pass the resolution. When we have the bill before us we shall be in a better position to make any required amendments or suggestions as to the period of time involved.

Mr. BELZILE: For that reason I am suggesting that we pass the resolution and proceed to a discussion of the bill.

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): Under this appropriation of \$85,882,200 is an amount of \$23,400,000: In this appropriation is there any provision for the deficit of Trans-Canada Air Lines?

Mr. JACKMAN: Yes.

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): I should like to know how much it is.

Mr. GIBSON (Comox-Alberni): This seems to be a peculiar way of proceeding. I think back to the time when the estimates of the Minister of Transport were before the committee. He told me then that so far as subsidies on the Pacific coast were concerned, the Canadian Pacific railway and the Union Steamship company were both granted subsidies of about \$400,000. This made up for the fact that they were not charging economic fares. He said the Canadian National Railways were excluded from the payment of those subsidies. It seems to me that if we give authority in this way, the Canadian National never has to be concerned about subsidies. It never has to be concerned about economic fares. An important principle is involved here, if we are going to say that anything owned by the government can always come back to parliament and does not need to consider costs of operation. It does not seem to be a sound principle.

When we ask United States tourists to come to this country to view the glories of the Alaska trip, we give them, and also our Canadian tourists, a \$200 trip and we charge them \$120 for it. If United States funds are that valuable to us, it seems to me there should be a cheaper way of getting them. Just to tell our nationally owned lines that they can

always come back here and get any sum they require to meet their operating deficits does not seem to me to be sound business.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the committee ready for the question?

Some hon. MEMBERS: No:

Some hon. MEMBERS: One o'clock.

At one o'clock the committee took recess.

The committee resumed at three o'clock.

Mr. ABBOTT: My parliamentary assistant explained to me that there was a discussion this morning concerning the provision under which the Minister of Finance may make temporary advances to the railway company to pay operating and income charges of the system. As hon. members of the committee will appreciate, that provision is to provide a form of revolving fund without fixing the top limit. It is logical to do that in the case of a publicly-owned corporation such as this, because surpluses in any year have to be turned into the consolidated revenue fund. If at the end of the year it develops that the advances have not been repaid out of revenue, under the terms of the bill which will be founded on this resolution they will have to be voted by an item in either the main or the supplementary estimates.

That seems the businesslike way to proceed. There is no intention or desire to flout parliament in any way. If it is preferred, when we come to the bill I am quite ready to provide by amendment that there will be a time limit as of March 31, 1949. Frankly I think parliament retains just as much control under the section of the bill which hon. members will see when the resolution is passed; but if the other method is preferred I would have no hesitation at all in putting in a date limit. I want to make it perfectly clear that the provision as it now stands does not take away from parliament any of its control over voting deficits of the Canadian National Railways and Trans-Canada Air Lines; it was simply to provide what seemed a practical and businesslike way of taking care of these temporary advances and their subsequent voting by an item either in the main or the supplementary estimates.

If the committee would permit the resolution to pass I give the undertaking now that if it is still the feeling that there should be an annual time limit I will have one of my colleagues move an amendment when the proper section of the bill is reached in committee.