

tember 8, 1970, went into a number of those questions. It went into the fact that Canadian National Railways chose the chairman of the pension board and decided on the secretary or executive officer of the fund. It went into the fact that there are seven men on the pension board, four of whom are directors of CN and three are elected from the employees. It went into all this in great detail and made recommendations. With respect to the pension fund and the pension board, right at the beginning the report reads:

It soon became evident to the committee members that there was a widespread and strongly felt dissatisfaction with the CN pension plans among the railway's employees—

The committee concluded that it was not fair nor just to have a pension board handling millions of dollars of employees' contributions; to have a pension board dominated by the company; that it was wrong that the chairman of that board should be a director of the company; that the chairman was not an impartial person; that the chairman had a vested interest in preserving the position of the Canadian National and disregarding the position of the employees and their pension rights; that the chairman was unfair and unjust in his dealings with those employees in regard to the pension fund. The only reason the committee was able to come to those conclusions based on the evidence presented was that some of us made life miserable for the government when it was trying to get the bill through the House. We wrung from the government a reluctant referral to that committee, otherwise there would have been no report. We see now that the referral to the committee was really a put-off, that the government was not sincere and did not care about justice for the employees.

Mr. Gleave: It never did.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): It said so at the time. I do not remember what office the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) occupied then, but I do remember that he said the government recognized the difficulties of the older employees on pensions and those on pensions right, and that he recognized the CN had difficulty with its financial structure. He moved the motion for referral to committee, and it was passed.

The committee made recommendations and concluded that the chairman of the pension board was unfair, unjust, dictatorial and concerned only with the Canadian National part of the pension fund and not concerned with the well-being of the employees. It recommended that the unions involved and the CN each choose an equal number of representatives to serve on the pension board and that an impartial chairman be appointed, "probably by a minister of the Crown".

That recommendation is as valid today as it was then, Mr. Speaker, but it has been ignored by the government that said it was going to do something about it. Obviously, the government was concerned only with cheating the employees of the CN; it was concerned only with cheating those who were on pensions and were denied fair treatment by the fund.

The committee pointed out that there was an annual surplus of some \$7 million. Multiply that by the number of years the fund has been in effect—the report was made in

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1970, so presumably there was \$7 million in 1969 as well, and in 1970 and in 1971—and that amounts to \$21 million. Every member of that committee recognized that justice had to be done to those who were on pension and recommended that the \$7 million annual surplus be used to establish a new pension level for the old-time railroaders who went on pension under a less generous plan than now exists. In other words, it should bring them up to a meaningful amount of pension. That also has been ignored. That means nothing more than the government cheating people, the government flying in the face of an unanimous recommendation of the committee.

As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, this matter was referred to the committee because some members of this House who were concerned engaged in a filibuster and because there was a deadline for the passing of that bill—the end of 1969. Nothing definite has come out of that examination. The recommendations have been ignored by the CN, by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and his tribe of professional ignorers of almost everything.

We want to get some action and activity from this bill. We do not think it is sufficient for members to stand in the House and talk about the things they are concerned about in their constituencies, valid as those things are. We all know that if the government sets its mind to something it will get it through Parliament even if it has to ram it through, as happened with the tax bill. We all know that logic, common sense, reason, appeals to justice and fair play fall on deaf ears. We all know that speeches in this House go over the heads of the government because their minds have been set beforehand—they have a determination about what the government intends to do and will not listen to another point of view.

We are concerned, as well, about Canadians on pension, about the financial structure of the company and about things like the movement of grain, improper freight rates, about how the public is gouged on freight rates, about railway abandonment proposals, about the curtailment of passenger service and the level of that service. We are also concerned about the servo-centres, about lay-offs and about the destruction of communities resulting from removing from them stations, station agents and railway service.

• (2150)

I do not know whether there is any deadline for this bill. I do not know whether the deadline is the end of this month—nobody has yet said—or any other time. I think there is a deadline in that the government wishes to get on with other legislative matters. I am sure there are other bills the government wants to get through the House, otherwise they would not be on the order paper and the government would not have introduced them.

Whether there is a deadline at the end of the month because that is the end of the fiscal year, or whether there is a deadline in terms of the government's own priorities, I think we should indicate to those government supporters who want to listen or who want to read *Hansard* that if we have to engage in a filibuster in order to get the valid and worth-while recommendations of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications made on September 8, 1970, accepted, we will just have to engage in a filibuster.