

[Translation]

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval): I shall not be as long as the previous speaker because I was asked to leave a few minutes for another member before six o'clock. I only want to make a few comments on Bill C-19 aimed at saving about \$1.5 billion. I think it is another omnibus bill in which family allowances are mixed with grain and flour transportation as well as industrial research. I always wonder why this government tries to complicate its legislation so that we are all mixed up.

The President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Andras) entitles his bill: An act to amend or repeal certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures. And how does he intend to do it? First by restraining the level of adult occupational training allowances. Three clauses of the bill eliminate once for all the Company of Young Canadians, four others freeze family allowances at the 1975 level. Three other clauses set a cut-off date for all applications for industrial research grants. Another clause at last bury Information Canada and the last, but not the least, repeals section 272 of the Railway Act.

Only this government can mix things like that. This is why it is very difficult to evaluate this bill. This small bill contains only 15 clauses, but after three or four days of discussion it seems that hon. members are only beginning the debate as the speakers are many. It is certainly because of the difficulty to evaluate such a bill.

Mr. Speaker, this mixing is probably aimed at making the members of this House pass certain things without realizing what they do. In fact, when you study this bill you do not know what sector of society will be affected most.

I would have liked to deal with most clauses but for that reason I will limit myself to only two main areas which I think are most affected in this bill. I will not comment on the clauses dealing with the Company of Young Canadians because that body was finally dissolved by the government and the funds are simply returned to the treasury. The same goes for Information Canada, an organization set up to sing the glories of the government. I already denounced Information Canada in the House suggesting that it was a purely political mouthpiece to spread Liberal propaganda, and I am very pleased that it has disappeared.

Mr. Speaker, they say they want to try to save, to restrain expenditures to the tune of \$1.5 billion. I wonder when I look at the expenditures—and I saw in the latest paper a reference to the expenses of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) who takes a \$10,222 trip to go and see his brother-in-law in Regina when he charged the public treasury for over \$740,000 for similar trips in the past three years, this same minister accepts to eliminate the assistance provided for the movement of western grain. I understand full well the anger of western as well as eastern producers following that decision.

If the government wants to cut down a few expenditures in certain areas let it start with the CN. Let it demand that that Crown corporation reduce the fantastic investments in the billions it is making in the hotel business. I think the CN was set up to ensure good transportation service, not to go into the

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hotel business thus competing with private enterprise in that area.

● (1730)

Of course, it is sitting in a good position in the hotel business because they are always sure to be helped out of their deficit budget by the taxpayers. But while they are in this business they completely forget the service they must provide to the public in passenger transportation. Mr. Speaker, I did an experiment very recently in my riding of Roberval on the Chambord-Dolbeau run. Indeed, since the schedule change on November, the Chambord-Dolbeau run operates in the small hours of the morning—four five and six o'clock in the morning—at a time when everybody is sound asleep both in the cities and in the country.

Well, those in charge—imagine how brilliant that is—those in charge at the CN found a new way to encourage those potential clients by locking all CN stations on the run. Not one is open. They are all locked. The stations are well lit, well heated, but it is impossible to get inside because they are locked.

One morning I saw a lady forced to get off at the station with her young child in a nice snow storm when no means of transport was available at the station. She wanted to phone but the door was locked. Running out of arguments the conductor, who showed more understanding than the technocrats who give such ridiculous orders, had to call the central office in Chambord on his intercom and ask them to send a taxi from that city to come and rescue the lady.

During all that time the train could not leave the station. How could they leave that person in a snow storm? They had to wait for a taxi to come and pick up that lady. That was in a city. Cases like this are experienced every day since CN management decided not to open the stations, because employees do not arrive before eight o'clock. And the hell with the trains. Employees have to open the stations, and if the train passes before that, who cares? Right now, there is nothing else to do but wait for employees to arrive.

Those big CN brains have the nerve to say they want to improve the service. They are incompetent, they bring us back 30 years behind, because 30 years ago we had a much better service in our area. We had a foreman and an inspector for the whole area, and everything was going fine. Now we have three foremen supervising two workers, and an inspector that rides along in the train once a week to eliminate or attempt to eliminate another maintenance worker.

So I tell the minister, if he wants to eliminate something in transport, let him reduce bureaucrats in the Montreal offices, let him increase the number of real workers, in order that they provide service. If the minister did something along those lines, certainly he would do a significant favour to the travelling public, while reaching the goal for which the CN was established. Why do they keep on doing such ridiculous things in our area? To push people out of patience, in order that they reject once and for all that mode? I am sure that a number of those people riding desks in the Montreal head office hope for