

Transportation

with me that there were very few permanent employees involved in the maintenance of way on these lines. The great proportion of this work was carried out by floating gangs which work for one or two days a week on one branch line and for a day or two on another.

As a result there are not many permanent employees working along these lines but, as I have said, if there is only one he should be entitled to compensation. We must take account of the fact that if a section crew or a section foreman is established at some point where a branch line is abandoned, the value of their property, if they have property, would be considerably reduced. They will have to sell at a loss and then incur a much higher cost in establishing themselves in new homes. This is one of the reasons for the recommendation of the former standing committee that some compensation should be paid to employees affected in such circumstances.

I do not intend to drag this out any longer. My proposed amendment, moved by myself and seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North, reads as follows:

That Bill C-231 be amended by adding in clause 314D after sub-clause (5) thereof, the following as sub-clause (6):

(6) Notwithstanding anything in section 182 of the said Act, where a company makes any change, alteration or deviation in its railway or any portion thereof or abandons any portion or branch line thereof which results in loss of employment by any of its employees either directly or through the exercise of seniority, the company shall compensate such employees as the commission deems proper for any financial loss caused to them by change of residence or loss of employment necessitated thereby.

My arguments in favour of having this provision included in the bill are substantiated by the fact that it was included in the old bill, No. C-120. It was recognized that provision should be made for employees dislocated as a result of branch line abandonment. This position was supported by the former standing committee, and I would appreciate it if hon. members would now give full consideration to it.

● (3:40 p.m.)

Mr. Pickersgill: Before you put the amendment, Mr. Chairman, I would ask you to consider whether it is one which it is competent to a private member to move on this particular bill. The hon. gentleman was quite correct in saying a similar clause was included in the bill which I introduced in 1964, but that bill in many respects was dissimilar to the present one. My reason for not including

[Mr. Fawcett.]

a provision of this sort in the present bill should be apparent to all hon. members. Certain developments have taken place since that time. My colleague, the Minister of Labour, indicated that he was considering other measures of a similar character and therefore it was decided that this bill should not include any provisions with respect to labour relations.

For that reason I submit that the amendment is beyond the scope of the bill and seeks to extend the scope of the bill. I also maintain that in seeking to extend the scope of the bill, if it were to be at all effective there would be expenditures which certainly are not contemplated in the bill and would constitute a charge on the treasury without there being a message from the crown in that connection. For those two reasons I ask Your Honour to consider whether the amendment is appropriate.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, not having anticipated that this point of order would be raised I do not have before me the terms of the resolution that preceded the bill. The minister is making the broad assertion that the amendment exceeds those provisions, and I think at some point we should have a chance to look at the wording of the resolution. I know that we dealt with the resolution a long time ago, last August or September.

Mr. Pickersgill: It was August 29.

Mr. Knowles: As to the point that the amendment involves an expenditure of money and therefore is beyond the power of a private member to propose, I would point out that the amendment requires the company, not the government, to compensate employees for any loss that may be sustained. Therefore, the minister cannot argue that this is a matter involving expenditure out of the treasury.

Mr. Pickersgill: I think the simplest thing would be to read the resolution which is to be found at page 787 of *Votes and Proceedings* for August 29. It reads:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to define a national transportation policy for Canada suited to modern transportation requirements and to establish a national transportation authority to effect the objectives of the national transportation policy; to provide for new methods of fixing freight rates and for the rationalization of branch lines of railway and passenger train services; to authorize the payment from the Consolidated Revenue Fund by way of assistance to permit of orderly adjustment to the new freight rate structures and the removal of other forms of assistance to railways; to authorize the payment of assistance from