

Supply—Transport

details at great length. Now along comes the C.P.R. with its legal brains trying to find ways in which to deprive its employees of the benefits of that code, simply because it does not want to accept legislation that makes things better for the workers.

The story of what the Canadian Pacific Railway is doing with the Canada Pension Plan and with respect to its own C.P.R. pension plan is likewise a very serious one in the annals of the history of this country. Here we have an organization which exists by virtue of what was given to it in terms of land grants, of moneys, rights and so on. Even in this day it acts completely unilaterally with regard to its own pension plan, telling employees what changes are going to be made, and telling them just how it is going to—

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Knowles: Just a moment. I know the minister is going to raise a point of order to the effect that matters relating to C.P.R. pensions have nothing to do with his estimates.

Mr. Pickersgill: I think, sir, that the hon. gentleman anticipated that I was going to raise a point of order. I am raising a point of order, and it is precisely the same point of order I raised with the hon. member for Winnipeg North and the hon. member for Red Deer, but with a little more sharpness because this hon. member has been 24 years in this house, very much longer than I have, and he knows the rules so well. By no stretch of the rules could a relationship of the C.P.R. with its pensioners be brought within the administrative responsibilities of the Minister of Transport. I am quite sure that the hon. member knows that.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, on the point of order, may I tell the Minister of Transport something that he ought to know, and it is this. When I appealed to the government of Mr. Mackenzie King, and he was connected with that government in a certain capacity, for action regarding the pension rights of railway workers, what minister did regard this as his responsibility, and what minister did bring in an appropriate amendment to make the change? It was the then minister of transport who recognized in that day—and he was told by Mr. Mackenzie King to recognize it—that it was his responsibility and that this was a matter of concern to the minister who

[Mr. Knowles.]

is responsible to parliament for the transportation industry of this country.

I submit that if any of the policies of the railways are of concern to the Minister of Transport, surely the way in which the C.P.R. or the C.N.R. treats its employees in terms of their pensions is part of his responsibility, and this is just as much in order during the consideration of his estimates as it was in the days of Mackenzie King.

● (8:50 p.m.)

However, Mr. Chairman, I was only using this as an example. I will come back to this subject at another point but at this time I just put this forward as an example of what this company is doing vis-à-vis its employees. It ignores their rights in the same way as it ignores the rights of the people of Canada to the kind of service a railway ought to be providing. There are other matters in respect of which employees have a grievance against the Canadian Pacific Railway—one of which is the way in which it is making its passes of no value at all. But we can get at that, I hope, when we have the Canadian Pacific Railway people before the standing committee, perhaps in a few days.

I want to say a word about one or two other subjects that come under the responsibility of the Minister of Transport. But I wanted to deal with the Canadian Pacific Railway first because I think it is one of the most important issues facing parliament; the number of speeches that have been made on it make that very clear. I hope the minister does not regard these just as speeches he has to endure; I hope he realizes that this is an issue about which he is going to have to take action.

I wish to say a word or two about air policy, or the lack of air policy, on the part of this government. Here, too, I am joining with my colleagues from Winnipeg—I was going to say my colleagues of all parties, but the Liberals do not have any members from Winnipeg, and I suppose there is good reason for that.

I wish to deal with what the government has done to Winnipeg as an air centre. Maybe we people in Winnipeg have an exalted opinion of the importance of our location, but we do not think so. Amongst the things that concern us is the failure of the government in the recent negotiations with the United States for a bilateral agreement to get any additional route out of Winnipeg into the United States. In fact I just cannot believe, indeed I