

House on October 5, 1970, and concurred in by the House of Commons on October 7, 1970, the said concurrence having been unanimous.

I point out that this is what is known as a reasoned amendment under the provisions of citation 382 of Beauchesne's Fourth Edition. I also point out that it is both a reasoned and reasonable amendment in that it calls for the implementation of a policy already approved unanimously by this House of Commons.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Although the Chair does not wish at this time to pass judgment as to the receivability of this amendment it does feel that it should read it for the benefit of hon. members. If hon. members wish to comment on the substance of the reasoned amendment which is before the House the Chair will make a decision on it, but at this time the judgment is reserved.

• (2:40 p.m.)

**Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, for a member from the east coast of Canada, participating in this debate is like talking about a ghost from the past because I believe most people vividly remember the debate of two years ago concerning the abandonment of the only rail passenger service in the province of Newfoundland. I suppose one could say we lost the debate because we lost the passenger service.

I should like to make a few remarks today concerning another kind of abandonment. Despite the fact that the members of the cabinet of the front benches are not present to hear my argument, and despite the fact that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson), who I understand is either in Europe or returning from Europe, is not here, I want to say that the ears of the Canadian National Railways which are present in the gallery—all four of them—should pay very close attention to this debate and the remarks I want to make because I expect a full response from the Canadian National.

Newfoundland is a province with half a million people and it is recognized that transportation is one of our major problems. Transportation is a difficult problem because of the geography, the fact that the province covers an area of 150 thousand square miles, and because of the distance from the major markets of Canada and the other nations. The sad story of the past two years is that Canadian National Railway have used the province of Newfoundland as the guinea pig for the proposal to downgrade rail services in Canada. It was used as a guinea pig by the President of the Canadian Transport Commission to conduct an experiment. I understand that three years ago, when the CTC was instituted, its main purpose was to reduce the cost factor and make the system pay. Where else but in this province could such a program be instituted? In view of our small population, there was less likelihood of a major outcry from the public. This is what happened. The Canadian National moved out. We raised this issue in the House of Commons day after day, and every member from this province spoke on it. I can see present today a number of

### *Canadian National Railways*

members who supported our efforts, but we did not receive any support from government members.

I do not believe the feeling in our party was exactly unanimous because some members thought there was a specific reason for the abandonment of rail passenger services on the east coast and that consequently such abandonment would have little effect on the rest of Canada. Today I noticed that the *Globe and Mail* contained an editorial on the abandonment of certain lines in Ontario. This is now a major issue. I see the hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria (Mr. Corbin) and I am pretty sure he will take part in this debate because I understand his riding will be affected. Many Ontario and western members will probably also take part in this debate because their controversy concerning the Canadian National in Canada has only begun. Unfortunately, we have lost the first round.

I had an opportunity recently to visit Bishop's Falls, one of the largest rail communities in my province. I spoke to a number of railway men in the last couple of weeks and have never seen the morale of any group take such a beating in such a short time as this group has. There is a tremendous uncertainty. They do not know where they are going. They do not have any assurance in respect of anything concerning their employment. The main reason for such uncertainty is that the Canadian National is moving in a most mysterious manner. There is a scheme on somebody's desk. I like to think that perhaps it is on the desk of the President of the Canadian Transport Commission. There is a planned phaseout of certain railway activities across this nation. This is not necessarily all wrong. I do not believe we can expect everything to remain the same for ever and ever amen. I believe there must be a fair amount of change, but I also firmly believe in the simple principle of management and administration of government that people must be informed of and involved in the decision making process. I make the charge now that the Canadian Transport Commission is hiding from the Canadian public its plan to downgrade rail service across Canada. There is a sneaking, conniving, surreptitious plan about which the public is uninformed. This is the reason for the uncertainty among railwaymen and the general public.

I shall draw attention to another plan. The Canadian Transport Commission has every intention not only to limit rail passenger service in Canada, as, has been proven in our province and in other areas, but—and I say this for Canadian National ears to hear—there is a plan to eliminate a good part of the freight distribution services in this nation. Last April I spoke to a good friend of mine in the Canadian National who is a very humane person and one who believes in trying to provide the best service to the people. He told me the Canadian National had on paper a plan to abandon all freight services east of Bishop's Falls in central Newfoundland. I remember thinking what approach one should take. I carefully analysed the plan. I was certain it was a fact that such a plan was on paper. I publicly exposed the plan and the Canadian National denied that there was any such plan. When the plan became public knowledge it was thrown in the wastepaper basket temporarily and that service