

CNR and Air Canada

not know whether he practices what was commonly referred to as the Horner theory in getting good press coverage, but I think his voice in this debate could assist tremendously in encouraging the development of an adequate transportation system.

We see all kinds of money spent on pretty frivolous subject matters and inquiries. Yesterday's whole debate dealt with that. Why can't the government invest a little money in a Canadian boxcar construction industry? As the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin) said, we are still using boxcars that are 50 years old.

But, Mr. Speaker, as soon as the potash industry became viable in Saskatchewan, the railways acquired new potash cars. As soon as the Kaiser Company came up from the United States and said it would develop coal in British Columbia and ship it to Japan, the CPR had a whole fleet of new cars built to haul that coal to the coast. For some reason or other we cannot build, buy or even steal a boxcar to haul grain. Surely, the government could arrange for the construction of more hopper cars for this purpose.

• (1710)

The port of Vancouver handles less than 600 boxcars of grain per day. It should handle 700 and it is six months behind now. The target is 800 but this has not been attained. The reason is obvious—the snowslides in the mountains. But the mountains have been there since the beginning of the North American continent and pretty nearly every winter there is snow in the mountains. Why can you not build more tunnels through them so that trains can be diverted?

There is provision in this bill for \$125 million for the construction of roadbed and \$19 million for branch lines. I would suggest that there should be a branch line west of Kamloops, from Ashcroft to Lillooet. In the event of a snow slide, this would allow for a diversion between Kamloops and Boston Bar. Cars could be sent across to the PG&E railroad and on to the port of Vancouver. On the map this is a distance of 30 or 40 miles, but even if they had to bend around a mountain or two it would only mean the construction of about 50 miles of railroad. Perhaps it would only be used in times of crisis, but it would be another way of overcoming the hazards of winter and the summer rock slides. During this past fall and summer there were some very bad rock slides in the Boston Bar area. My investigations convinced me that no attempt was made to maintain the telegraph signal line in that area. If a rock slide occurs the line is broken and a red light flashes on. The engineer of the approaching train then has enough time to stop the train. This telegraph line and signal system has not been maintained and one wonders why. Many accidents are reported and I do not think this is the fault of the workmen.

The trackage of the CNR used to be divided into sections and a sectionman was responsible for a certain area. In the last five or six years, each section has been doubled or tripled in length and the same man may now have three or four times as much trackage to look after. This could be because of greater efficiency or perhaps the dollar bill, but it does not contribute to an adequate transportation system.

The Vancouver harbour handles about 37 per cent of the tonnage moving in and out of Canada and over 50 per cent of the grain. Most of the tonnage of grain and other commodities used to be moved through the south side of Burrard Inlet. The trackage is all there, but the city of Vancouver built right up to it and so caused congestion. A good port has to be adequately protected from the winds and the ocean, and it must have depth, but it must also have an approach from the land side. The south side of the port of Vancouver is certainly congested. The north side is a little better but there is only one track there. Vancouver harbour and Burrard Inlet have been there since the beginning of Canada, but there is still only one track. There has been talk of building a causeway across Indian Arm and a second railroad to run into the north shore of Burrard Inlet. This is where the Saskatchewan pool elevator is situated. It can handle over 65 cars and has trackage for that number as it is the most modern elevator.

The unit train concept has recently been developed. Such a trainload of grain was picked up at Moose Jaw, moved to the north shore of Burrard Inlet and unloaded on the continual loading system at the Neptune terminal. The Vancouver wharf people want to get into the business of handling grain, but they need more trackage to serve the north shore of the Burrard Inlet. This could be achieved by the use of imagination and the expenditure of a little money; it would help the economy of this country. We are a trading nation and we must facilitate the movement of goods in and out of our harbours. The port of Vancouver is one of the 15 largest in the world. We are not proud of it and treat it like some old discarded woman, but we should be proud of it. We should spend the money to put enough trackage there to keep our commodities moving in and out. We certainly have not made any real move toward building an adequate transportation system.

I should like to refer now to section 23 of the National Transportation Act which deals with the question of captive shippers, as well as the definition of a carrier in the movement of goods in the public interest. It states that railroads must set rates for the movement of goods and the servicing of the country in the public interest. There have been three court cases because of this section but no decisions have been handed down yet. The act provides that if one is a captive shipper he can appeal to the transportation commission to have his rates set. However, no one has yet been able to declare himself a captive shipper under the act. Since the act is so poorly worded it is no wonder it is difficult to understand section 3(d)(ii) which reads:

—tolls and conditions that do not constitute—

(ii) an undue obstacle to the interchange of commodities—

The section goes on to provide that tolls must not be unreasonable and not discourage the development of primary or secondary industry. Certainly, freight rates on manufactured goods have discouraged the development of primary and secondary industries. To use carrots as an example, the rate on a boxcar of carrots moving from Toronto to Alberta is less than half the rate on a boxcar of carrots moving from Alberta to Toronto. That is the same product moving over the same trackage in the opposite direction. Why should the rate be double on products