

Transportation

be more fully considered. But—and it is a large “but”—the basic principle of competition is going to cause great damage to many areas of this country, I very much fear.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I have listened with great interest for a goodly number of days to the very interesting and constructive debate we have had on this very important bill, which I know has received a great deal of consideration by the committee. I do want to compliment the minister. In all my 21 years in this house never have I seen him exercise such flexibility of approach, have such patience, or respond on occasion with such spontaneous humour. I think he has excelled himself on the occasion of this very important bill.

I have listened to the arguments which have been put forward, particularly by the representatives of the prairie provinces, knowing what a great deal this transportation policy means to them, even though on occasion it may have been somewhat tiring to hear arguments repeated even as many as three times—and I think that is quite a modest estimate. I also think that all members of the opposition have taken a very constructive approach to this bill, in moving their amendments, and so on.

Before we conclude the study of this bill in the committee stage, Mr. Chairman, I wish to say a few words on behalf of my constituents. I want to emphasize that in speaking for my constituents on this question I do so regardless of party. I also speak on behalf of practically all the organizations of any consequence and size in the constituency of Kootenay West. I am taking a particularly non-partisan approach to this question.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, during the consideration of the proposed section 314J (1) (c), which reads

—“uneconomic service” means a passenger-train service that has been determined to be uneconomic by the commission under section 314I—

—I was called out of the house rather hurriedly and when I returned this section had been passed. Therefore I have to take the opportunity which is provided on clause 1 to say what I wish to say.

I think that clause 1 does provide this opportunity, Mr. Chairman. The first paragraph reads:

It is hereby declared that an economic and efficient transportation system making the best use of all available modes of transportation at the lowest total cost is essential to protect the interests of the users of transportation and to maintain the economic well-being and growth of Canada,

[Mr. Cantelon.]

and that these objectives are most likely to be achieved when all modes of transport are able to compete under conditions—

—that are stated in succeeding clauses.

I know that the hon. member for Kootenay East, the minister's parliamentary secretary, is interested in this question because he took a very active part in the original fight for the retention of passenger service on the Kettle Valley railway. There may be some new members of the house who have not heard of this railway before. I think it is quite truthful to say that I speak with some spirit of conviction on this matter. I should also like to make mention of the Minister without Portfolio.

An hon. Member: Which one?

Mr. Herridge: I am referring to the younger and better looking one from Montreal. He was born in my constituency and I am sure that he is with me in spirit in what I have to say this evening, though he is not here at the moment. As I say, I am sure we have his sympathy.

In passing, Mr. Chairman, I should like to mention that I am very pleased to know that some airport development is taking place in the constituency of Kootenay East. I understand this is being undertaken this year and that in the near future it will be the second best airport, next to Castlegar, in the Kootenays. I am sure everyone is pleased to see an airport being developed in the hon. gentleman's constituency. The airport at Castlegar has developed over a period of ten years as a result of grants by the federal government, which everyone in the district appreciates.

● (8:50 p.m.)

While passenger services were abandoned on the Kettle Valley Railway by the Canadian Pacific in 1964, I have been asked by my constituents to make another plea for the reconsideration of this important question. Numbers of people have spoken to me about this, because their attention has been attracted by all this talk on the transportation bill. I say, without hesitation, at all, that I speak for a vast majority of people I have the honour to represent, regardless of party.

Many people, Mr. Chairman, do not realize that at the present time about 150,000 people in southeastern British Columbia are denied passenger service because the Canadian Pacific refuses to accept its responsibilities to these people, and to this great wealth producing area from where large quantities of minerals are shipped. There are large shipments of