

Committee on Railways and Shipping

must be so tremendous as to offset any advantage which might have been gained by giving this work out on contract. The primary purpose for my few remarks tonight is to request this government to stop punishing the men on the C.N.R.

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, this evening we have heard various members set out reasons why there should be competition among the air lines of Canada. In that regard,—and this is something that I do not think has been mentioned as yet—one good reason exhibited by Trans-Canada Air Lines itself as to why there should be competition generally is that in the routes flown by T.C.A. which are competitive, Trans-Canada Air Lines used the newest, most modern and up-to-date planes. For instance, on the New York run they use the new Viscount on their flights and to the West Indies and overseas they use the new Super Constellation. Those are very fine planes. They are safe and comfortable and their upkeep and maintenance is good.

But as is known by many hon. members of this house, I imagine, on the routes where there is no competition the D.C.-3's are still in use. They are good serviceable planes. They are safe. Like the old Ford car, they take you there and get you back, but it takes an awful long time. The same thing applies on other runs. For instance, on some of the runs I believe to the United States such as the run from Toronto to Tampa where there is no competition, the old North Stars are used. Again, they are good safe planes. We have plenty of evidence of that from their performance but in some cases it takes almost double the length of time to get there. I think that is probably one of the best evidences of the advantages of competition. Where T.C.A. has been in competition with other air lines, they have had to use modern up-to-date planes. They have done so and have still managed to maintain their excellent record of safety of which I am sure everyone is proud. But when they have no competition, they use old planes. I think that is a good example of why there ought to be competition.

I have one or two other remarks to make in this regard concerning Trans-Canada Air Lines. The remark has often been made, "Best in the air, worst on the ground". I think perhaps that is a slight exaggeration but I believe there is some truth in the remark. I think many hon. members have had this experience. I have had it myself. I have received many complaints from constituents who have made reservations on Trans-Canada Air Lines but who, when they

[Mr. Van Horne.]

go to the airport, after having confirmed beforehand, find from time to time that their accommodation is not there for them, that something has happened, that their seat is not there and that they have to miss the plane and go on the next flight. That has happened. I know it will happen in any business but, from the number of complaints I have received, it seems to happen more often than is necessary.

I should like to make one further remark in this regard, Mr. Speaker, and that is with respect to the time of flights of Trans-Canada Air Lines. Time and again particularly on the overseas and Caribbean service—and I have had many persons come to me about this matter—their flights repeatedly seem to be delayed. If it is a matter of weather, we all understand that is a very necessary thing, or if repairs are necessary to the planes. But from what I have heard, it certainly seems to happen more frequently with Trans-Canada Air Lines than with other air lines. I refer to this matter of flights delayed for no apparent reason. If the aircraft are constantly in need of repair, which is the only apparent explanation, something ought to be done about it. People go to the airport. They phone before they go, and they get there half an hour or an hour in advance of the flight time and have to wait two hours, and sometimes three or four hours, and no reason is given for it. If the delay in those flights is necessary, as it probably is,—there must be some reason for it—all that Trans-Canada Air Lines need to do to placate the ruffled feelings of the passengers is to give a simple explanation over the loud hailer and tell the people that flight 272, for example, is delayed because of temporary trouble to the engine or inability to get food supplies on board, or they are waiting for another aircraft, or something along that line. If that were done it would go a long way to increase good will among the passengers of Trans-Canada Air Lines.

Mr. G. K. Fraser (Peterborough): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words with regard to the Trans-Canada Air Lines. Many planes arriving at the Malton airport are delayed in unloading passengers. In some instances they unload 54 passengers from a North Star and crowd them into one room in the Malton airport like a bunch of cattle. They are taken out of their comfortable seats in the plane and put into this one room, and in many instances they have to stand for from half an hour to an hour while passengers from another plane are going through immigration and are having their baggage examined. I had that brought home to me last Friday night when 54 passengers were