

of which was given yesterday. I refer to Bill C-224 which proposes to amend the Canada Pension Plan in ways with which I completely agree. I wonder, however, if Your Honour would study the question concerning whether there should be a Governor General's recommendation with regard to a bill which involves no expenditure of public funds. I was indeed aware of the recommendation because it appeared on the order paper when the bill was presented for first reading yesterday, but I did not have the bill until this morning. I have carefully studied the bill. So far as I can ascertain every cent of expenditure referred to in that bill is to be paid out of the Canada Pension Plan fund. It is not a charge in any way on the federal treasury.

I would point out, Sir, that when the Canada Pension Plan was first introduced the defence in respect of there being a Governor General's recommendation, and also a resolution back in those days, was that there were certain administrative charges until the plan was functioning. But of course we are away past that stage. I also remind Your Honour that there have been two or three private members' bills which have been allowed, despite the fact that no Governor General's recommendations were attached, because the Canada Pension Plan even to the point of administrative expense is completely self-sustaining.

● (1500)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I appreciate the hon. member giving notice of his point of order, but it seems to me that he is arguing the point of order which he says he will raise later. I appreciate the point which the hon. member is making. It will be notice, not only to the Chair but to hon. members to the left and to the right of the Chair, to give the matter some thought in the meantime so they will be ready whenever the order is before the House, which it is not at present.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS AND AIR CANADA

PROVISION FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES AND GUARANTEEING OF SECURITIES AND DEBENTURES

The House resumed, from Monday, October 22, consideration of the motion of Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton) that Bill C-164, to authorize the provision of moneys to meet certain capital expenditures of the Canadian National Railways system and Air Canada for the period from the 1st day of January, 1973 to the 30th day of June, 1974, and to authorize the guarantee by Her Majesty of certain securities to be issued by the Canadian National Railway Company and certain debentures to be issued by Air Canada, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the first thing I should do now that I am rising

Canadian National Railways and Air Canada

again is to put the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) at ease. I am sure the information which was not given in answer to my question is available somewhere, but I am citing this incident as an example of the difficulty a member of this House experiences in participating fully and intelligently in any debate on transportation. There is no available means by which members may find out where the dollars and cents are going in the transportation system of our nation. Whether it be Air Canada, the public telecommunications system or the Canadian National Railways, these figures are absolutely unavailable, hidden or refused. I think it is significant that today the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) probably evaded the answers to all the questions except two. In answering those two, he had a chance to take a small crack at the Maritimes and to help Mr. Bourassa by going into the Ste-Scholastique problem. Those are the only two definitive answers that he could give in the House, and certainly all questions were within the scope of the minister.

There is no doubt that the initial planning of the transportation system of this country was conducted in a capable and wise way. The results proved the worth of the plan, or at least they did until such time as we found that we had no national transportation policy. We now find ourselves failing as government to keep pace with the needs of the times. This absence of policy, the absence of concrete action, the fractionalization of the whole problem as we take it point by point and region by region have all negated much of the good that should have come from the wisdom of our forefathers as they planned our system.

For instance, we have seen the passenger service virtually disappear from the scene. I submit to you that this was by design or through lack of action by the government at the crucial moment when the passenger system over the rails became so totally and utterly inconvenient that the travelling public refused to patronize it. When you find yourself at McAdam Junction, or in the wilderness somewhere in this country, waiting two, three or four hours to catch a plane you realize that with a little bit of co-operation between railroads and some good planning by the management of the travelling public could have been conveniently to the point where we could still have had not only an active but a prosperous railway passenger service, one which I think this country needs in the worst possible way.

I can remember as a young man sitting at Windsor Junction in Nova Scotia for four hours waiting for the CPR and CNR trains to connect so that I might move from one train to the other to my destination. I can assure you that any wait of four hours from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. in the wilderness around Windsor Junction certainly discourages one from travelling by rail. It is a dandy little point, but a miserable station at which to wait. I submit that this was intentional. I submit that the government of Canada either does not know or did not care. These incidents involving misservice to the public took place one after the other.

With regard to the shipment of freight, it is obvious for those who are using the rail system, as it was to those who were using the passenger system and resorted to automobiles or aeroplanes as an alternative means of transporta-