

information is correct, this means the elimination of parlour cars and dining cars on the Ottawa-Montreal run. Of course, as we know, a dayliner is a sort of glorified bus on rails. It is my information that these changes are scheduled for February 1, next year. The trains to be affected are No. 31, which leaves Montreal for Ottawa daily at 8.10 a.m.; No. 131 which leaves Montreal on Sundays only at 10.15 in the morning; the west bound train No. 30, which leaves Ottawa for Montreal at 7.40 in the morning and No. 36, which leaves Ottawa for Montreal at 4.40 every afternoon. On this train you can obtain dining car service, buffet service and, for all I know, bar service. Not having travelled on the train, I have no personal knowledge about that. My information is that these services are to be suspended as of February 1.

If these reductions go into effect, first class rail passenger service with meals between the nation's capital and the largest city in the nation will disappear. The Canadian Pacific Railway already has pulled off its additional trains from the same route. I hope that every member of this House, and in particular all those members who are from Ottawa, Montreal, the area beyond Montreal and who represent that area between Ottawa and Montreal, will raise hell about this during the present debate. Of course, if my information is not correct, I will be happy to be corrected. If my information is correct, I hope that the members most affected and their constituents, will see to it that the matter is raised loudly and vigorously during the debate on this bill.

I now come to another matter that was raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) who opened this debate on behalf of our party. I am sure members of all parties will say something about this, and I intend to take my turn in doing so. I am referring to the pensions of retired CNR employees and to the CNR pension plan generally. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that one year ago almost to this day, a debate began on a bill similar to this one for CNR financing. In that debate, Members of Parliament on all sides of the House persuaded the government to give a commitment that CNR financing and CNR pensions would be referred to the standing committee which would study these matters and make recommendations to this House.

We were all very happy that the government agreed to do this, Mr. Speaker, and I, having been a member of that committee, wish to say that it was a very good committee. I am sure it must have heard between 40 and 50 briefs. That is only a guess on my part. Possibly there were more. It sat dozens of times and spent hundreds of hours on this item. One cannot say that those members who served on it were docile Members of Parliament. There was the hon. member for London East (Mr. Turner), who is a railroader. There was also the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Skoberg), who is a railroader. There was the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner), who is not a railroader but who can make as much noise any day as a railroad. The committee consisted of men like that. I, too, an ex railroader was a member of that Committee. All of us had some knowledge of railroading and we all knew a little about pensions. In addition, we were served by an excellent staff.

Canadian National Railways

The Chairman of the committee did an excellent job and excellent briefs were presented to the committee. Believe it or not, and I was prepared to bet one year ago that this would not happen, the committee presented a unanimous report.

Not believing that that would happen, the hon. member for Moose Jaw and I were quite prepared to bring in a minority report. Nevertheless, that committee brought in a unanimous report which speaks well not only of the committee but of the soundness of the case put forward by the CNR employees and pensioners.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Hear, hear.

Mr. Benjamin: Only because the case of those men was so good and so strong did the committee bring in a unanimous report. In the discussions we had during the drafting of that report, we became aware of the unanimity of members from all corners of the House. There was a singleness of purpose in the minds of all members. We adopted the report unanimously; it was presented in this chamber and, again, wonder of wonders, something happened which rarely happens. When that report was submitted to the House, it was adopted by this House unanimously. That took place under circumstances even more rare, circumstances that I am sure Mr. Speaker would wish to see repeated. The report was so adopted without debate. Yet, despite that, Canadian National Railways has refused to act on that report. It ought to be pointed out that while the committee was drafting that report, Canadian National Railways through its vice president, Mr. Tarr, saw fit to announce some pension plan changes which in my opinion were very minor and totally inadequate. I repeat here what I said before the standing committee: that was a deliberate attempt by the Canadian National management to undercut the committee and head off its report. It was an insult to that committee and an insult to Parliament. Worse still, it was an insult to the CNR pensioners.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Hear, hear.

Mr. Benjamin: I hope that either the committee, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) or the government will censure the CNR management, and censure particularly the vice president, Mr. Tarr, for the way that committee was treated and for the cavalier attitude expressed by the CNR towards a unanimous report which was adopted by Parliament. I hope that the message gets through to them very strongly. I hate to say this, Mr. Speaker, because I have a great deal of admiration and respect for the management of Canadian National Railways. They have operated that railway extremely well in the face of horrible odds.

● (4:00 p.m.)

With regard to the matter of pensions for employees, Canadian National has acted little better than the best of