

Canadian National Railways

publishes statistics in the newspapers almost every day showing how many more people are using the buses. But after a year it does not even have bus shelters available for use by passengers. Adults and children alike are forced to stand for hours on main highways, regardless of weather conditions, waiting for buses which arrive at times determined by the condition of the road or the readiness of employees. Some of these people are sick, but no thought was given to proper comfort when the experts planned the service to replace what they called a nonpaying passenger service.

● (3:40 p.m.)

They brag about the time of the cross-province trip of 14 hours and some minutes, but there is not too much said about the lack of comfort, proper reservation systems, connecting services or many of the basic services which should be provided. There is also no consideration given to small bus companies which have provided a service for years and are now at the mercy of the CNR in regard to monopoly of service. While I realize that problems exist, I hope that the experts will pay a little more attention to studying and implementing a better service in regard to which the CNR have a monopoly in Newfoundland.

I would also like to mention the difficulty I have in understanding what happens to all these studies, particularly the study made of the problems of the CNR coastal service between the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Hon. members raise these problems, a study is promised and that is the last we hear about it. I hope that whoever is responsible will produce the report in regard to the inferior service of the St. Barbe-Blanc Sablon ferry service and carry out the necessary action to overcome the dangerous transportation conditions which prevail between these two points before something serious happens. I am very disappointed in the lack of protection of seniority and job security promised to railway employees when the service changed. Many infractions have occurred in my district and no objections are raised, because employees fear losing their jobs altogether.

My colleague the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Lundrigan) emphasized very forcibly the downgrading of our rail lines, rail express and freight service. I understand from section men on Newfoundland rail lines that section orders are issued every day to downgrade speeds at road intersections. This is because there are not enough men to maintain these lines. We were promised that this sort of thing would not happen when rail passenger service in the province was cut. Therefore, how can we rely on statements about improvements being initiated when, instead, the service is downgraded?

I should also like to mention the uncertainty existing about the provision of air service to the west coast of Newfoundland. Again, all kinds of studies have been made in this connection but people are kept in the dark as to future intentions. In this regard I think there should be some dialogue with the people who are directly affect-

[Mr. Marshall.]

ed. Perhaps Information Canada will be able to lessen the concern of these people and say once and for all what is going to happen under regional air policy plans. I hope the minister will accept the many invitations he has received to visit the province and to state once and for all what the future holds for provincial air services in the province. I also hope that the officials of CNR will heed the words of my colleague from Gander-Twillingate and will give some assurance that the transportation problems in Newfoundland will be dealt with.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support the amendment moved by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), which states that, in the opinion of this House, no consideration should be given to the making of any further financial guarantees or grants to the CNR until improvements in pension arrangements recommended in the report of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications are made.

Mr. Speaker: Before I call on the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin), perhaps I should at this point refer to the proposed amendment suggested to the House earlier this afternoon by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). The amendment was not put to the House because the Acting Speaker had serious reservations about the procedural aspect of the amendment.

In the meantime, while hon. members were diligently occupied in considering and debating this bill, I too was diligently occupied in trying to make up my mind whether or not this amendment should be received. Having looked at the authorities and precedents I would be pleased to hear from the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre if he is prepared to indicate to the Chair why in his opinion the amendment ought to be received.

I am sure the hon. member, who has long experience in procedural matters, knows how difficult it is to introduce an amendment that is, in essence, a reasoned amendment. My impression is that this is not quite a reasoned amendment but it is a proposal which is substantially beyond the scope of the bill. This would be my thought. Even after looking into the precedents and citations I am tempted to reach that conclusion, but I would not want to do so until I had heard from the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I hope you will not think I am making a professional effort if I try to protect you from temptation! It was my understanding that this procedural issue might not be dealt with until Monday, so I have not been doing any immediate homework on the issue. However, as Your Honour has said, this is a subject on which some of us have done some debating over a number of years.

Reasoned amendments have been in various forms. I dare to hope that Your Honour has no question about the form of this reasoned amendment. As a matter of fact, it goes back to what was the form for quite a few years, namely to the use of the words, "That the bill be not now read a second time but that it be resolved that"—some-