

I wish to give an example of freight costs. A businessman in my district showed me a freight bill for furniture. The weight of the shipment was 1,040 pounds. The value of the shipment was just over \$500. The freight cost was over \$170. That amounts to some 34 per cent. Is it any wonder that costs are higher in Newfoundland than anywhere else in Canada?

Another example of the problems in Newfoundland was brought to our attention during the recent railway strike in that province. This was referred to by members from Newfoundland who spoke earlier. The problem has been temporarily resolved, but the situation brought about an inconvenience to citizens which one would not believe possible with our supposed modern methods of transportation. What is the government doing about it? There is another re-organization, another study, another build-up of bureaucracy with new objectives, and another ad hoc approach without long-term planning other than seminars, meetings and more studies which we will probably never see.

We must give some recognition to the government for the fact they are trying to overcome the backlog of problems that exist between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. However, my main complaint is the lack of projected planning. The port of Corner Brook, which is the hub of transportation activity on the west coast of the province, is an example of the lack of projected planning for future needs. New facilities were provided in 1968, but through lack of foresight the facilities were cut because of, the government said, financial restrictions. It was only a matter of \$3 million, and the increase in the needs would be a couple of hundred thousand dollars more. By the time the project was completed a few years later, the storage space provided was too small.

This emphasizes the fact that no one in the government listened to the interested groups about the steady build-up of traffic over the years and the fact that this build-up would continue. Here we are, just a few years later, and the situation has become desperate. There is no space for storing merchandise and this has resulted in cost increases due to breakage, with corresponding losses incurred both by businessman and by the consumer. An extension to port facilities amounting to only 22,000 square feet is required, but it is like pulling teeth to get answers as to the status of the project because in our bureaucratic system it seems no one knows what the other person is doing.

● (2030)

The government is blind to the fact that the economic development of Newfoundland will never be achieved unless transportation is treated in a manner which recognizes the geographic isolation of the island. This focuses attention on the need for improvement in port facilities, the lack of which presently deters the industrial expansion which could take place because of the richness of the province's natural resources.

Another example of the lack of foresight by our planners is provided by the circumstances in which a modern linerboard mill was established in western Newfoundland at the cost of \$175 million. Not until the mill was almost completed was it realized that adequate port facilities

Canadian National Railways and Air Canada

were necessary to bring the timber resources from Labrador and to provide for the export of linerboard as well as for the pressure of incoming traffic. Already, after only a few months of operation, the presence of some 300,000 tons of commodities has taxed the 950 feet of berthing space available, and the volume of goods piling up will double before the end of the year. It is true that dredging work is presently proceeding under the auspices of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand), but the need to extend harbour facilities has reached emergency proportions.

The western part of the province possesses unlimited natural harbour potential. I suggest every effort should be made to co-ordinate the efforts of the various departments involved, including Regional Economic Expansion, Environment and Fisheries, Public Works, and Transport to develop the potential of this region so as to benefit the province and the nation. Requests have been made to the government to develop the area known as Curling. According to a study completed by provincial government agencies, there is justification for improving harbour facilities there so as to enhance economic development. I suggest to the Minister of Transport that representatives of the four departments I have mentioned should visit the area with me and look into the possibilities in this part of Canada.

As I have mentioned on several occasions there is certainly a need to pay greater attention to the isolated part of Canada which lies to the north. There is particular need for the government to fulfil its promise to provide communication facilities to this part of Newfoundland. I refer to the agency known as Canadian National Telecommunications which comes within the responsibility of the Canadian National system. The report of the CNR for 1972 proclaims improvements in the service to northern Newfoundland, but though I have been in Ottawa for five years I have not seen much improvement in the service: I still cannot get through to these people on the telephone.

The report states that in Newfoundland, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia, the number of customers using CNT long-distance telephone increased by 20 per cent. All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is this: I suspect that whatever part of that 20 per cent increase applies to that area of northern Newfoundland which lies within my constituency consists of telephone callers trying to reach me, or me trying to reach them, and either I can't hear them or the lines are busy or they can't hear me. I can only say, further, that the Telesats and the Aniks have not done much for northern Newfoundland. The situation can only be described as shameful when in this day and age there is little or no communication possible with the part of Canada I have mentioned.

I turn, now, to the subject of air transportation, another form of transport which is low on the priority scale of the Minister of Transport, at least as it applies to that part of Newfoundland where we have the convenience of air travel. Here, again, there is a conflict of interest, if I can use that term. On one hand, when one wants to move from Newfoundland to the mainland one finds the most dedicated employees of Air Canada ready to help, but when one wants to move from the mainland to Newfoundland the reverse is true.