

longshoremen at Port aux Basques in the district of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. They are having a meeting tomorrow with these two ministers. But, the government of Newfoundland cannot get a meeting, the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) and myself cannot get a meeting with them, and the railway unions, which represent 2,000 to 3,000 people who receive their livelihood from working on the Newfoundland railway, cannot get a meeting with these mighty ministers. But when somebody from Port aux Basques in the district of the Secretary of State for External Affairs wants a meeting, a meeting is arranged almost immediately. This is the brutal political way in which these ministers operate.

Today the Minister of Transport, in answering a question, had the gall to suggest that support of the Newfoundland railway was one of the political and humanitarian aspects of his mighty service to the nation. I say the man is an ogre who has to be driven from office.

On Tuesday, December 5, we are having a meeting in St. John's. We are going to rock St. John's. The reverberations will be felt up here. Perhaps the hon. member for St. John's East will make it. He may have trouble with conflicting business which he has to do here. The railway unions will be involved, and other members of parliament from Newfoundland, if they are interested. The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Minister of Transport, and Mr. Bandeden will be at that meeting to answer these 2,000 or 3,000 Newfoundlanders as to why they are being abandoned and thrown into the cold by the federal Liberal party here in Ottawa. They will want some answers: they will not like what they hear.

The railway is being crucified by inattention and neglect. I have confirmation from high sources in CN that the Minister of Transport has told them—

Mr. Collenette: Name them.

Mr. Crosbie: I will name them when I have to name them. He has told them, "You are to operate as a commercial operation. If you want to lay off people in Newfoundland, if you want to cut back trains in Newfoundland, if you want to use private shipping services in Newfoundland and this causes layoffs of dozens or hundreds, you can do it; you are to operate as a commercial service. Just let us know ahead of time how many you are laying off and when, but you have our permission to do it." That is the policy of the Minister of Transport here in Ottawa. But he will pretend, when he gets to the public, that he is trying to protect the Newfoundland railway.

The government's attitude is that the CN has permission to do away with the Newfoundland railway. By next February, if action is not taken by the government, the process will be well under way, and 2,000 or 3,000 people will lose their jobs. That is a serious thing in a province which already has an unemployment rate in excess of 16 per cent officially, and twice as much unofficially.

What will the government do? Will the government accept my motion or not? What will it do about the bus service? The Sullivan royal commission recommended no increase in fares

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and found no substantial bus service—it attacked the bus service being offered, and said that there should be no increase in fares until there is a substantial increase in facilities. Then a week later the CN applied to the Canadian Transport Commission for a 36 per cent fare increase, and the government in Ottawa did nothing to prevent that. It allowed its creature, the CN bus service, with this inadequate service, to apply for a 36 per cent increase. This is now being fought before the courts and before that commission in Newfoundland. The government had not dealt with both recommendations.

The Sullivan commission recommended that the federal government pay for 90 per cent of the cost of improving the substandard Trans-Canada Highway in Newfoundland. We have not received a word from the Minister of Transport on that recommendation. The synchrolift in St. John's was recommended by the Sullivan commission six months ago. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Horner) was batted to his knees by nanny, by his own nanny. He has a nanny now in the President of the Board of Economic Development Ministers (Mr. Andras), and he has a nanny in the Secretary of State for External Affairs who said, "No, you cannot have a synchrolift in St. John's until I tell you that you can have it." That recommendation was ignored by the minister.

We have the implementation of a year-round ferry service to Argentia recommended by the Sullivan commission. It was ignored by the hon. gentlemen opposite. We have a recommendation that there should be either no subsidies to direct water carriers to Newfoundland, or equal subsidies to all three carriers and not just a special subsidy which Clarke Newfoundland steamship service has been getting for the last ten or 15 years. That should cease, but there has been no action on that.

When the Minister of Transport was questioned here, he said that he was waiting for the final report of the Sullivan commission. Well, this is the final report. It does not say "interim." It says, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Newfoundland Transportation." He need wait no longer. In its preface, the commission itself said that the second volume of the report will contain, in addition to elaboration of important solutions, conclusions and recommendations based upon specific research projects completed during the summer. It is just a supplement. This is the final report; this is not an interim report. The minister has still not taken any action, because he said that he is waiting for the final report.

In March, 1977, he could not wait to get this report, its recommendations and conclusions. Today he does not care whether he has it or not because, in league with Mr. Bandeden of CN, he is hoping that CN will so cripple the Newfoundland railway in the next six months, that there will not be a chance for it to continue operating. There will not be a stick or a stone carried on that railway. Who will move their cargo with the kind of uncertainty which now faces the rail service? That is why this motion is before the House.

I know it will be talked out by gentlemen opposite because they have no choice. They have taken no action, and they will