

There was one other proclamation about the wonderful connecting service we were going to get in Newfoundland after a trial period. I have one petition signed by over 500 residents of six communities in the St. George's part of my riding, with a suggested route schedule attached, because they were left out of the main stream of decent service. This petition was sent to me on September 25. We all know the answer a member of Parliament receives when he gets in touch with the proper department of government. Out come the study gimmicks again. The department stated they were making a review of all our schedules and that my request would be taken into consideration. Two months later, I received an answer stating that they were sorry but it was not their intention to extend the bus service at the present time. This was a month after the decision had been made.

They had two years to study a bus service. It was decided that Newfoundland would lose its rail passenger service in any event, but they did not have the foresight to properly study a bus service to replace it. But how could they be expected to, Mr. Speaker, when they could not operate a train service in Newfoundland? It was the only one. They had a monopoly on passenger service and they could not make it pay. The Railway hierarchy have experts too, Mr. Speaker, and they have all the fancy phrases which are so in vogue these days. The railways have their research and development branches, industrial development and international consulting divisions. They have their land bridge concepts and systems activities. They have systems called "TRACS", their ACI's and CIP's. What I suggest is that their top echelons take advice such as that give by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) at Harrison Hot Springs, and do a little genetic engineering.

● (5:30 p.m.)

In a speech reported in today's *Globe and Mail* to the Canadian Association of Movers, Mr. Pickersgill stated that before the CNR or CPR are allowed to discontinue passenger services there will be full public hearings. He said the public interest aspects of every application for passenger service abandonment would be fully investigated by the commission. I suggest they might as well save their breath, their time and money, because the decisions have already been made.

I warn the members who will be affected by the 31 services that are due for abandon-

Provision of Moneys to CNR and Air Canada
ment to get moving right now if they want to resist. If they require any advice about rail-roading, let them ask some of their Newfoundland colleagues. They at least have the Canadian Transport Commission order on which to base their arguments, something of which we did not have the benefit.

An interested constituent of mine wrote to me as follows:

I was quite concerned recently to read that the Canadian Pacific Railway have applied to abandon all passenger service except some commuting service at the same time Canadian National are planning to cut back on their passenger service including that in the maritimes. I realize that I may be a voice crying in the wilderness but as you know from our previous correspondence I am convinced that on the basis of social benefit from tax dollars the railway is by far a lower cost method of transportation for both passengers and freight than to continue to increase our highway system. The travelling public have gotten in the habit of preferring the independence of their own cars and small trucking firms or even individuals prefer the independence of being able to operate on the highways.

The fact, however, remains that both these methods are more costly than the rail transportation if rail transportation is kept modern and efficient. It will just cost the Canadian taxpayers several times more to let traffic of both kinds to drop off on their rail lines and force millions of dollars into new highway programs. Japan has led the way for many years in this regard stimulated by the fact that they did not have enough land to permit highway systems. However, in their case it has turned out to be much better for their economy as well as saving the land. In the United States where land is becoming a premium they are now reverting in the heavily travelled area i.e. Portland, Maine to Richmond, Virginia to belatedly improve their rail service. Just because we have lots of land here in Canada, let's not make the mistake of losing our rail service and then having to go back to rebuilding it 20 years hence.

This is a concern that has been expressed by people across Canada.

May I also ask the Minister of Transport to consider the improvement of regional services both in the province of Newfoundland and in other maritime provinces? I should also like to hear something of the proposed improvement to facilities at the airport at Deer Lake used by Eastern Provincial Airways.

I conclude by reminding the government that it is duty bound, in accordance with its responsibility to the people of Canada, to fulfil their pledge of equal rights for all Canadians regardless in which part of the country they live. These rights include the right to rail passenger services. Even though these services have been denied Newfoundlanders, I suggest this does not give the gov-