

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Or wear a pansy.

Mr. Rose: In the meantime while this tragedy of El Salvador is passed off, news reports indicate that the current U.S. ambassador is prepared to recommend further U.S. arms shipments to the government junta, while the ambassador's immediate predecessor, Ambassador White, just this weekend labelled such shipments as contributing to a slow motion coup by right wing officers.

Will Canada now stop backing this U.S. military policy in this sad little central American country, and instead urge in the strongest possible terms that the U.S. stop its proposed arms shipments and support a negotiated settlement?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, I think it has always been the policy of this government to prefer a negotiated settlement whenever that is possible. I am surprised that the hon. member is so concerned about what is going on in El Salvador when his party just asked us to withdraw from NATO and NORAD, thereby leaving us defenceless against other people acting in the same way as those in El Salvador.

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COMMUNICATIONS

TELIDON CONSULTANT'S STUDY—PROJECTED COST OF SYSTEM TO FAMILY USERS

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, on Friday the Minister of Communications gave me a copy of a consultant's study on Telidon prepared for his department in December, 1980. I thank the minister for his courtesy. Does he disagree with the consultant's findings that if Telidon's customers are charged the projected \$25 a month for service it would require a family income of almost \$70,000? Also, if that were the case, there would be only 13,000 customers in Canada for Telidon by 1985?

Hon. Francis Fox (Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, I am told that other reports have been made on the same subject. For instance, the Hickling and Johnson report published in February, 1979, predicts that the Canadian home market will be 1.8 million sets by 1991. The predictions also made by Mr. Hough indicate a rather substantial market.

However, I point out that Mr. Hough's report was done before some of the major breakthroughs, particularly the adoption of teletext standards by AT & T in the United States. The general feeling of the department is that because of these developments some of the conclusions in Mr. Hough's report do require modification.

Oral Questions

FIELD TESTING OF SYSTEM

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, Mr. Hough also complains that in studies which have been done on Telidon to date, field trials have not been done by charging customers for the service being provided and consequently are invalid. What field tests are anticipated by the minister for which customers will be charged the fair market value of Telidon?

Hon. Francis Fox (Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, talking about field trials, and there are a number ongoing. There is a new Bell Vista field trial which will be ongoing in Toronto and Quebec City. I hope to be able to announce a new teletext field trial probably next week. We are obviously still in the field trial stage. We hope that the field trials will demonstrate that there is a market in homes for this type of technology. I should caution the hon. member and indicate that as far as videotex and teletext is concerned they are at the same stage as computers were a number of years ago. The initial paying market will be found first in businesses and institutions. It will be at a later date only when we expect to have a marketable videotex product for home consumption.

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RAILWAYS

REPORTED PLAN TO ABANDON LINE FROM HALIFAX TO MONTREAL—REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. It has been customary to hold hearings before rail lines for freight or passenger service are discontinued. While the minister is not obligated by law to hold those hearings, it seems to me that because of the abandonment of the line from Halifax through Saint John, Sherbrooke and Montreal there should be a search for public opinion with respect to such abandonment. Would the minister explain why his department has made a survey but refuses to release the findings to the public and is not asking for comments on such a drastic action nor holding any hearings?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, should cabinet decide to do what my hon. friend is afraid it might, I will explain fully why it has done so.

IMPACT ON SOUTHWESTERN NEW BRUNSWICK

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Madam Speaker, is the minister saying to the people of the Maritimes and all the way west to Montreal that cabinet is going to decide without seeking any public input whatever with respect to abandonment of such a line? That leaves southwestern New Brunswick with virtually no access whatever to the passenger service to which we have been entitled since the initiation of rail passenger service over 100 years ago? Is that the way we are going to