

Canadian National Railways

travel, therefore, is not possible sometimes for several days at a time. In addition, there are a great many administrative problems that have arisen in connection with Kennedy airport. These make air travel very difficult and cause delays. For these reasons alone, there should be some means of travelling between these two great metropolitan areas when so much business is done between them. It would seem to me that some form of rail transportation, perhaps only one train a day, should be provided. I suggest that the Canadian National, if the Canadian Pacific is unable or unwilling, should take steps immediately to try to restore passenger service between these two great metropolitan areas.

I come now to the question of passenger service elsewhere. We have seen, of course, the discontinuance of many branch lines in the rural areas of Ontario, western Canada and other areas. Perhaps the part of Canada that has received the biggest kick in the teeth in this connection has been the province of Newfoundland. The decision to remove the passenger service in Newfoundland was made prior to the last election. Perhaps this had something to do with the results in Newfoundland, I do not know. Certainly, however, it seems very strange treatment of the people of Newfoundland, especially in view of the fact that ever since that province joined confederation the Liberal members from the area have always been ready, are ready, to act on behalf of the party. It seems strange indeed that both the present administration and the previous administration would give Newfoundland such rough treatment.

I know it has been said that Canadian National Railways will provide bus service in Newfoundland. Well, Mr. Chairman, any hon. member who has had the pleasure of visiting that great province will know that the central part is not heavily populated. In addition, since Newfoundland is an Atlantic province, it receives heavy snowfalls in the winter. All I can say is that I would hope the president of the Canadian National and some of his officials who are responsible for this decision will take a ride on a bus during the winter. Perhaps they would then find out what it was like. I cannot see why the people of Newfoundland should be given such poor and inadequate service.

• (12:20 p.m.)

I repeat, Mr. Chairman, that I do not think it necessarily matters in this country that in

every case the costs of communication and travel be met, but I think we would all agree that the costs should be met as much as possible. Even the Postmaster General agreed the other day that there should be some sort of subsidy for such services. The Postmaster General was trying to cut down the amount of subsidy required for the post office. The same case applies to the railways. Although it depends on the kind of accounting we use, the claim is nevertheless made that a passenger service cannot make money. My point is that it is not necessary that it should. As I have said several times, the C.N.R. should provide a service to Canadians in view of the peculiar geographic qualities of our country.

Before I resume my seat, Mr. Chairman, I should like to make one last appeal on behalf of the people of Newfoundland in view of the treatment that they are presently expecting to receive. It has been rumoured—I realize there are always rumours circulating around this place—that some sort of deal has been made between the government, the C.N.R. and, I understand, the government of Newfoundland whereby, if the trans-Canada highway costs are met, railway passenger service would be discontinued in Newfoundland. If some kind of agreement or deal has been made, then I am sure that the present government is not bound by it and could withdraw from the position taken. It seems a sad thing that the people of Newfoundland who have recently joined Canada should be given such rough and unenviable treatment by the very government that brought them in.

Mr. Skoberg: Mr. Chairman, in reading last year's resolution in connection with this same capital expenditure, issue of securities and so on, I find the following introduction:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to authorize the Canadian National Railway Company to make capital expenditures and to supply the financial requirements of affiliated companies—

The resolution before us, Mr. Chairman, reads as follows:

That it is expedient... to make capital expenditures including investment in securities of affiliated companies—

There is a slight change of wording. The question I should like to put to the minister, and through him to those responsible for this resolution, is: Why is there a change in wording? It suggests to me that separate entities are being established as such. It will be much more difficult to secure the necessary information to enable the committee on transport and communications to discuss intelligently