

And then the rest of the report consists of the balance sheet and statistical tables which I hope will give the committee a fairly comprehensible grasp of activities.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Gordon. Now, if the members will refer back to page 6 we will take up operating revenues and operating expenses.

Mr. MACDONNELL: Mr. Chairman, there is one general question I would like to ask at this time.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. MACDONNELL: Perhaps it should be addressed to the minister rather than to Mr. Gordon. I notice that with respect to the board of directors, the number is very small; am I correct, only five or six altogether?

Mr. GORDON: Yes.

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: Yes, that is right.

Mr. MACDONNELL: Now, I would like to ask you this question: is it a matter of policy to keep the board so small? I am sure that Mr. Gordon would agree with me in general that it is a good thing for an executive head to have as much in the way of fresh ideas from outside as he can get. I don't mean the directors should interfere with management, but I merely mean that you get fresh views if you have a fairly wide range of people on the board, I would have thought; and I would like to know whether that conclusion was arrived at as a matter of policy. It seems to me that you deprive yourself of the advantage of outside views.

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: In the first place, these members of the board of directors are permanent, they are not employed in an advisory capacity. They are appointed by the Governor in Council to administer the affairs of the railway; and while there have been representations from time to time to increase the number on the board, the government has not seen fit to change it.

Mr. MACDONNELL: By the way, Mr. Minister, how often does the board meet?

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: Once a month. Every time a vacancy is about to arise the question comes up as to whether we should not change the geographical location from which the member of the board comes; and the question also arises as to why there should not be more representatives from B.C. or additional representation from Newfoundland. But, until we amend the Act under which the board is appointed the position remains as it is now because the Act provides for a seven man board of directors.

Mr. MACDONNELL: I know that, but may I point out to you, Mr. Minister, that there is such a thing as amending an Act. I would imagine the minister could change his views as to whether it would be wiser to have a larger, a more representative board.

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: I can tell you, Mr. Macdonnell, I have no pronounced views on it nor, I am sure, do we have as a government. When the matter has been up for discussion we have come to the conclusion that it would not be desirable at the time the discussion took place to amend the Act, and we saw no reason why we should change our views then.

Mr. MACDONNELL: Do you not agree with the view that a board more comparable, let us say to that of the T.C.A. would be preferable? This board represents an operating institution which is one of the largest in Canada, one which has problems of extensive technical difficulty. That is why I raised the question as to whether a wider representation on the board might not be desirable, one through which ideas could be projected from the board through