

Much of the trouble clearly came from faulty decisions on the part of Canadian National Railways. They seem to have a strange tendency to make our difficult transportation problem there positively acute at times. Eruptions and disruptions occur from time to time. It even seems that they have to create these conditions every so often.

Instead of having the vessel *Confederation* remain at Borden as it always had, someone had the brilliant idea of moving it to Halifax. This imposed unemployment on the men of Borden and diminished the ferry fleet at the onset of winter just as they were in the process of negotiating a new contract. I need not point out what this does to the whole concept of the National Labour Code. It would be interesting if the minister could find out who assumed the authority to make this far-fetched and unnecessary transfer of the ship from Borden, its home port, to Halifax. Was it Canadian National Railways or the Department of Transport?

Whilst I have no need or desire to talk about the Canadian Pacific Railway in this regard since our province never had that corporation, I always find it necessary to invoke the Department of Transport because one is never sure what the role of the CNR as an agent or manager for the Department of Transport is as it relates to our ferries. When there is trouble, confusion follows as we seek explanations. I wonder why the suggestion was made? It looks like foolish economy, if economy at all. It could only be economic if no human beings were involved as workers or as potential travellers.

The crews of the ships in Borden have rendered fine service through the years, and have shown a great deal more sensitivity to the needs of the general public than has the management of the CNR. I can say this without prejudice or partiality since, to a large degree, these men are not constituents of mine. They are very fine workers for the public in this most important and essential service. It is essential for Prince Edward Island which has been troubled and traumatized by transportation difficulties for some 90 years.

It is essential, Mr. Speaker, that we get some sort of guarantee that our links with the mainland will not be subject to administrative stupidity of the type which has so often tied up our ships. The one thing we were solemnly guaranteed was continuous and efficient communication with the mainland. But when one sits in one's car for eight hours

*Provision of Moneys to CNR and Air Canada* looking at an idle boat, it is neither continuous nor efficient but it is terribly frustrating.

• (4:20 p.m.)

This is where the government of Canada has a responsibility. This is why it is proper for me to mention it as the Parliament of Canada seeks to look at a piece of legislation. I have been wondering why there has been a recent rash of efforts toward petty economies, or apparent economies in the ferry service. I wonder whether it is because those of us who, after careful thought and consideration, endeavoured to argue that the ferry service would be so expensive that it was sound economy to build a permanent crossing, were so successful in our advocacy of this point of view that someone suggested to the CNR, "Make no mistake about it; try and make this work as economical as possible regardless of what you do to the service." This could be the reason, or it could be that so many blunders have been made in the service, for instance putting narrow-gauge lines on the new ferry thinking it was destined for Newfoundland, that when it was arranged to go to Prince Edward Island there had to be a costly widening of the rails with a consequent enlargement of the expenditure.

There are many things I would like to discuss, and perhaps they may come up in committee, but the final matter I wish to discuss now concerns the oldest and perhaps the noblest—and I use that word advisedly—railway ferry on this continent, the old boat the *Prince Edward Island*, which I see now is advertised for sale by Canadian National Railways. This was a boat promised by Robert Borden when he was campaigning for election in 1911 in the city of Charlottetown. He said very simply, "If I am elected prime minister of Canada you will have your rail car ferry." He was, and they did. The interesting thing about it is that in the midst of a tremendous world war when every British shipyard must have been working at top capacity that contract, which had been let in 1912 or 1913, was pushed forward. The boat was built in 1915 and sent across the submarine-infested Atlantic in 1917 to honour that commitment and to give to the people of Prince Edward Island that which that very honourable and able man, Sir Robert Borden, told them they would have—a proper adjustment of their transportation claims on Confederation as at that time.

I am pained when I read that this fine ship is up for tender. But we are told that the