

Supply—Transport

Mr. Blackmore: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for Kootenay East is so eager to talk that I marvel he has not made a dozen speeches of his own already. He interferes with other people more than does almost anybody else I ever saw.

Mr. Nickle: Those on the government benches do not need Alberta gas; they are generating enough of their own.

Mr. Laing: Ten Tories in the house.

Mr. Knowles: One hundred and fifty Liberals absent.

Mr. Blackmore: The Alberta government, a Social Credit government, believes in private enterprise. The fact that it believes in private enterprise, and that the people of Alberta have shown that they believe in private enterprise, has had a great deal to do with the development of oil. I ask whether any man having a \$1 million company in his charge would take his money in to invest in a province where the people had elected a government that had committed itself pretty well to robbing private enterprise of what it had.

The Chairman: Shall I call it nine o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Section stands.

Progress reported.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hour for private and public bills having expired, the house will resume consideration of the business which was interrupted at six o'clock.

SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Beaudoin in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

463. Departmental administration, \$1,370,576.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): Mr. Chairman, for a short while I was greatly puzzled to find the report of the Canadian National Telegraphs, but I believe I am right in stating that it is contained in the report of the Department of Transport under the division called telecommunications. The last item refers to:

Construction, maintenance, and operation of the government telegraph and telephone service.

I want to make a plea for the extension of telephone and telegraph service in Newfoundland. The minister is already aware of the recommendations which I have made in regard to the radiotelephone on Colinet island. The government accepted that idea and extended it to many other islands throughout Newfoundland. But it seems to me that on the mainland of Newfoundland there is, in isolated districts, a need for an

extension of telephone or telegraph service. In the report of the department dealing with this subject, under the heading of "Telegraph and Telephone Service"—and I am speaking of the annual report for 1951—at page 150 I find the following:

The chief function of this service is to provide telegraph and telephone service in remote or sparsely populated sections of the country where, due to economic considerations, commercial companies are unable to operate. In addition technical and, in certain circumstances financial assistance is given to small rural telephone companies which are usually established on a co-operative non-profit basis.

Today we heard the minister state that in British Columbia the telephone business was being given up because it had extended beyond the capacity of the C.N.P. and was being taken over by a private company or was ready to be taken over by a private company if a private company was interested. I notice here reports from different provinces, where a similar service is being provided. The report states that, so far as Nova Scotia is concerned, in Cape Breton the work of improving existing circuits was continued with new construction for the year being confined to short extensions for new subscribers. It states that the various submarine cables along the coast line of this province gave reasonably reliable service, although several are in need of replacement owing to age, and plans in this connection were made for the next fiscal year.

Referring to New Brunswick, the report states that direct telephone service was established between the Point Sapin area and Richibucto and proved to be of considerable benefit to those concerned. The report goes on to say:

That radiotelephone link between Grand Manan Island in the Bay of Fundy and the mainland at St. George, N.B., the establishment of which had been undertaken during 1949-50, was put in commercial operation in March, 1951.

Then it states that—

The local submarine cables and landlines which serve the islands in the Grand Manan-Campobello area, suffered relatively few interruptions during the year and service was generally satisfactory.

Referring to Quebec the report states:

A long distance radiotelephone link was inaugurated between Grindstone, Magdalen Islands, and the mainland at North Head, Cape Breton. This made long distance telephone service available to the residents of the islands for the first time and was immediately put to extensive use.

And then this paragraph:

The expansion of the local distribution system on the islands was continued during the year but the demand for service continued to out-distance the enlargement program and there is still a substantial number of outstanding applications for telephones—as is the case today with the majority of telephone systems in the country.

[Mr. Byrne.]