

Hon. Mr. Rowe: What I am saying is that if instead of having 50 million people travelling over a certain highway route in a given period of time you have, in one way or another, 100 million, that will necessitate that much more in the way of highway services. I am sure my honourable friend is familiar with what has happened in Japan. Had they not upgraded their railway systems there would have been chaos now. Had they not utilized the railways available to them, every square inch of the country would have been taken up by highways and airports by this time. The same thing applies throughout Europe, where increasingly they are utilizing their railway systems.

What I am suggesting is that rather than downgrading the passenger services already available, those services should be upgraded. A program aimed at upgrading the roadbeds and equipment would entail the spending of a good deal of money—in the long run perhaps several billions of dollars. But this would be a good investment if, in so doing, we prevented the destruction of that irreplaceable asset, good land. I say "irreplaceable asset," because no one knows how to increase the amount of land which man has at his disposal at this particular time. On some future occasion I should like to develop the theme a little further.

I do not make these remarks in any sense of recrimination. I am not blaming any particular government for what the CNR has done. I think what the CNR has done, regardless of who is responsible, is reprehensible; I think it is wrong. What the CNR has done with respect to its passenger services is having a detrimental effect on Canada, and I feel, if we are to protect our heritage, we should be insisting that our railway services be upgraded to the point where a significant proportion of the travelling public will not only be encouraged but will feel it necessary to use those railway systems as opposed to relying on motor vehicles and airplanes.

Hon. Mr. Cameron: What about the CPR?

Hon. Mr. Rowe: I have referred to the CNR in making my remarks because that is the one with which we have the most dealings. What I have said about the CNR applies to the CPR. I have not done a great deal of travelling in Western Canada in recent years, but I have noticed a decline in the quality of the CPR's service.

To give just one illustration of that, very often my wife and I would go to Montreal on business trips, and whenever we found ourselves with three or four days at our disposal after our business was concluded, we would take the overnight train to New York. We would get on the train in Montreal at 11.30 p.m., go to bed, and wake up in Grand Central Station at 8 o'clock the next morning. It was a convenient and relatively cheap way of travelling to New York, because we also saved the expense of hotel accommodation for one night. Until our last two trips, the service had been very good. However, on our last two trips the service was so deplorable, everything about it was so bad, that we said, quite deliberately, "This is it; never again," and for the last five years we have not taken that trip. We would not even think of taking a train to New York now because the service is so bad.

What has happened on that run is happening throughout Canada and, needless to say, throughout the whole of the United States. Only now have the Americans come to

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realize, to their regret, that they should not have allowed it to happen. The Americans now have to retrace their steps. There is no doubt at all in my mind that the United States is going to have to spend tens of billions of dollars over the next 10, 15, or 20 years to resurrect the railway passenger services.

● (1430)

The Hon. the Speaker: If no other honourable senator wishes to participate in the debate—

Hon. Mr. Buckwold: Honourable senators, I move the adjournment of the debate.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: Just in case.

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL FINANCE

INFORMATION CANADA—CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the consideration of the Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance on Information Canada, tabled in the Senate on Tuesday, April 30, 1974.—(Honourable Senator Langlois).

Hon. Mr. Langlois: Honourable senators, this order stands in my name but I would be pleased to yield to Senator Robichaud.

The Hon. the Speaker: Has the Honourable Senator Robichaud leave to proceed instead of the Honourable Senator Langlois?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Louis-J. Robichaud: Honourable senators, occasionally we read in the press or hear on television that there is little life in the Senate. Those who are critical of the Senate should have been here a few minutes ago to hear the debate between the Acting Leader of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition and Senator Argue on an important motion respecting the adjournment. It was a lively debate and one worth listening to by anybody, particularly those who are critical of this institution.

My remarks this afternoon will not be lengthy. I shall speak only on the report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance that is before us. Following my remarks in opening, let me add that if those who are critical of this institution were to follow the activities of senators, they would realize that we are often called upon to be in two or three places at the same time, because there are so many things going on. For example, there are the activities of our various committees, which perform excellent work for all of Canada. An example of that is the report of our National Finance Committee on Information Canada. I do not suppose I should come to the rescue of this committee, because I am a Johnny-come-lately member of it. I have attended only one or two meetings, since I am a newcomer to this institution. However, I support this report, which is extremely well prepared, almost in its entirety. I did not have the good fortune to attend the numerous meetings held by the committee. I did not even read all the reports of the evidence submitted