

Supply—Transport

a quarter to nine in the morning and have waited until after two in the afternoon before any accommodation was offered them.

This is a most unfortunate situation. I am bringing the matter to the attention of the Minister of Transport because I have always found him co-operative, helpful and courteous. These people say that this is proof that, so far as the Canadian National Railways are concerned, Newfoundlanders just do not count.

I do not believe that. I asked the agent at Louisburg on the day we arrived why it was one of the regular Canadian National coaches could not be put on at that point, and I was told that a proper car could not be used because the cars were too long for the curves.

I do not know what the facts are, but that is what I was told. In other words, they could not just put another car on that road. I am sure the minister will understand that I am speaking in good faith, and I hope he will take the matter into consideration.

As I said before, the Minister of Trade and Commerce did undertake, as Premier Smallwood stated—and he always says what is completely true—that proper accommodation would be provided. This is another little incident which is of interest in Newfoundland, and which is set out in a newspaper published in that province. This newspaper *The Sunday Herald* has a circulation of 19,749. Without delaying the house longer I shall read this article, because I believe it will appeal to the minister. The headline says: "Passengers spend hours in darkness, with madman aboard train". Then the subheading is in these words: "Harrowing trip." The article goes on to say:

Passengers on a recent C.N.R. St. John's bound express were treated to a rare experience when those in the first class coaches were forced to sit for hours in the darkness, listening to the ravings of an insane person being brought to St. John's in a strait-jacket. In addition, those going to the diner had to eat their meals by flashlight thoughtfully provided by the steward.

This article is under dateline of March 18. It continues:

The incident occurred about a fortnight ago on an eastbound train. At Clarendville, shortly before dark, a policeman boarded the train escorting a mental patient in a strait-jacket.

This is in the district represented by the Secretary of State (Mr. Bradley).

The two sat in a first-class car, amongst the other passengers, two of whom were expectant mothers. Soon after the train got under way it was discovered that at least a portion of the lighting system had broken down and there was no light in the first-class car.

For several hours the passengers were forced to sit in complete darkness until a makeshift battery system was set up which provided a small amount of light on one side of the car only. In the meantime the mental patient had not been exactly quiet, and many passengers, especially the expectant mothers, were greatly frightened that he might

[Mr. Higgins.]

get loose in the darkness. Other passengers complained to the conductor, but of course there was little he could do about the matter.

In the diner, a part of the special Bonavista branch car, the steward had to place a flashlight in a drinking glass to enable passengers to see what they were eating, but even then, as one passenger put it, "You couldn't tell the pork chops from the sausages."

When the train arrived at St. John's, passengers had to use matches to find their luggage, and all are hoping that they will never again have such an experience.

I am quite certain the Minister of Transport will take care of these matters.

Mr. Isnor: I should like to direct the attention of the minister to the answer given today to a question standing in my name. It has to do with purchases of coal by Canadian National Railways. The first two parts of the question were as follows:

1. What quantity of coal (a) Canadian; (b) United States, was purchased by the Canadian National Railways in the years 1947, 1948, 1949?

2. Of orders placed, what quantities of (a) Canadian; (b) United States coal were delivered in each of these years?

Those parts were answered in full, but then followed what I considered the important part of the question which read:

3. What are the names of coal suppliers (a) Canadian; (b) American?

The answer given by the minister was as follows:

For competitive reasons it is not in the general interest to provide the names of individual suppliers.

I feel that a more complete answer should be given, because it is in the interests of the small operators, particularly those in Nova Scotia, that this information should be available. I did not ask for the prices paid; I simply asked for the names of those supplying the coal. I think the minister should look into this further, and, if possible, furnish the names of the Canadian suppliers at least. I am not so much concerned with the names of the United States suppliers.

Mr. Chevrier: The answer given was the answer the officials of the Canadian National Railways indicated to me should be given. The attitude taken by the officials is as stated in the answer, that for competitive reasons they should not be asked to give this information. The committee on railways and shipping is master of its own destiny, and if the committee decides that that information should be given, the officials will have to give it. But I do not think the committee will insist upon its being given if the officials can give a good explanation of the competitive reasons. It may be that because of competition with other railroads it is not in the interests of the government-owned railroad to give this information. My