

*Oral Questions*

track approach has been established. A substantial interim pay adjustment has been put on the table to try to go part way in resolving this issue.

I should remind the Hon. Member that it is a matter that is within the domain of the collective bargaining process, and together with adjustments and the collective bargaining process we would hope that a satisfactory resolution could be achieved.

I should also say that a meeting was slated for November 24, which was unfortunately cancelled by the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada. As the employer, we stand ready and hope we can sit down and negotiate this in a satisfactory manner.

## STATUS OF BILL C-33

**Mr. Barry Turner (Ottawa—Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the same Minister. It concerns the area of public service compensation issues, namely, Bill C-33, which was introduced in the House almost a year ago.

**Ms. Copps:** Order!

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton):** I wonder if we can get an indication from the President of the Treasury Board of when the Bill is going to have second reading in the House so it can then go to committee—

**Ms. Copps:** Come on!

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton):** —for public input?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for that question. We hope to proceed with this very quickly. It is an important Bill that provides a new mechanism for ensuring indexation. We hope that we can work out some sort of arrangement with House Leaders that we might be able to proceed with this in a very expeditious manner.

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## CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

## TERRA NOVA TELECOMMUNICATIONS—POSSIBILITY OF PRIVATIZATION

**Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, Terra Nova Telecommunications, commonly known as TNT in Newfoundland, a federal Crown corporation, sent letters to 400 employees in Newfoundland saying that their company could be up for sale as early as next week. The 400 employees who received these letters live in Gander, St. John's, and Cornerbrook. I ask whatever Minister is responsible for this atrocious decision by what logic did the Government of Canada decide to sell this company, which is making money

for the people of Canada and employs so many Newfoundlanders, when a sale to its biggest competitor, Newfoundland Telephone—that happens to be, by the way, in Ottawa having meetings—would cause a substantial lay-off of people in the very province that has the highest unemployment rate in the nation?

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I suppose it is hard for members of the Opposition to understand that it is extremely hard to sell companies that are not making money. That is one of the reasons for selling them, when they do make money, if you have other reasons for such activity.

The situation is that Canadian National is actively considering the sale of Terra Nova Tel, which is a telephone company subsidiary in Newfoundland, and its other non-rail assets, because it has a huge debt. I think it amounts to something like \$3.4 billion. That is why it is deciding whether or not, depending on the prices it can get, it should sell any of its non-rail assets so it can concentrate on its main business, which, of course, is the rail business.

If it does reach a decision that it should sell Terra Nova Telecommunications, it is going to proceed by ensuring that full commercial benefits accrue to the corporation, that the employees are fully protected, that established levels of service are maintained, and that the interests and concerns of any communities involved are protected, including the town of Gander. It will use a commercial bid process, and among the conditions of sale will be a requirement for the new owner to honour all existing labour agreements and assume all pension obligations now in place.

If you want to spread a false rumour, Mr. Speaker, there are three ways; telephone, telegraph, or tell-a-Baker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

## CN TOWER—FATEFUL PROSPECT

**Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister says that non-rail assets of CN are under consideration for sale. All right, the CN Tower, the tallest free-standing structure in the world, is a non-rail asset. So I ask the broadest free-standing structure in Cabinet, the Minister of Transport, who, if he went to the CN Tower perhaps it would no longer be the tallest free-standing structure in the world, is the CN Tower now under consideration for sale?

Is CN Explorations, with considerable oil and gas holdings in western Canada, also under consideration for sale? Is Northwest Telephone in northern British Columbia also under consideration for sale?

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I think I have pointed out all non-rail assets. Now, unless the CN Tower can go choo-choo-chooing along, it is a