highly suspect. It has been suggested that the company wanted to validate what had been done. If so, it acted incorrectly. The company ought to have gone before a committee and made all the facts surrounding the transaction available to members of the committee. If debates on bills like the present one are to be fruitful I think that hon. members of this house ought to know all relevant facts. Clearly, hon. members do not know everything they ought to know about this company.

For instance, it has now been established that the company in question is foreign owned. I maintain that quasi public utilities such as this one ought to be owned and controlled by Canadians. If hon. members are to vote intelligently on bills like this they ought to know whether the company in question is Canadian or foreign owned; because by their votes they will tell Canadians whether they are in favour of foreign or Canadian ownership of our assets.

If we want our utilities to be owned by Canadians we should look carefully at bill S-12. I am frightened by the implications contained in the bill, and I think it would be well for hon. members to know all the facts surrounding this situation before voting either for or against this measure. Even if the bill were to go to committee any witnesses who may testify would say only what they want hon. members to hear. I am sure that much information would not be divulged. As has been said before but not emphasized enough, perhaps, Bonaventure and Gaspé Telephone Company which serves the south shore of the Gaspé peninsula is a subsidiary of Quebec Telephone, which in turn is owned by a foreign company.

• (4:50 p.m.)

Actually, as suggested by my colleague, this is really the first chain of ownership. It indicates that this company is really part of an over-all chain, a part of something with which I believe not too many of us want to be associated. I agree completely with my colleague from Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin) that a close look must be taken at everything that comes before us relating to the ownership of these particular companies.

We in this party, believe there are certain things that must be controlled by the public. The public must have a complete say so far as the setting of rates is concerned. I understand that this is the last day for lodging appeals against the increase in telephone rates proposed by the Bell Company. This is a typical example of what will happen if we allow bills such as this to go through unchallenged.

I believe that any company wishing to do business in Canada, and not wholly owned by Canadians, must be rigidly regulated by the enforcement agencies which we have. I would like this bill to be explained further. I believe there are more facts with regard to it that should be considered. I believe hon. members feel something must be done to provide more facts with respect to such bills.

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, there is not much time left for debate today on what might appear to be a very innocent looking bill, No. S-12. I have prepared some notes for my contribution and I presume I shall have to leave them aside for some other time because it had been my hope to trace the chain of ownership of this company in some detail.

It has been a shock to me since coming to Ottawa to find that frequently we see a move being made in bills of this type to hand over some of the small remaining portion of Canada to foreign ownership. If there is anything in Canada that should be publicly owned it is those monopolies which are complete monopolies, and the telephone system is one of them.

It is rather amazing to see a member of the government party advocate that we reach into, what should be the public sector of ownership, and turn it over to a foreign nation to control. We, in the New Democratic party, say it is time we called a halt to this. It is time these moves were exposed so that the Canadian people may be made aware of what is happening in this Canada of ours.

This bill tells us that the Bonaventure and Gaspé Telephone Company wishes to sell its assets to the Quebec Telephone Company. That is very innocent. The average citizen would say there is nothing wrong with it. He does not look beyond the first move.

On December 3 last the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert) clearly traced the chain of ownership of this company and it led right down into the United States. The chain started with the Quebec Telephone Company, went to the Anglo Canadian Telephone Company and across the border to the General Telephone and Electronics Corporation in the United States. In my frank opinion, this information should have been given to the house by the sponsor of the bill and by the party he represents. Members on the