

*Private Bills*

gross income of \$471 million a year. I think it is preposterous that such a company should have an income like that.

If there were a federal representative among the directors of the company, we could have questioned him this afternoon and secured from him the necessary information, that is to say why rates go up when there are more telephones, whereas the greater the number of subscribers to a newspaper, the cheaper the cost of printing it. Should it not be the same in the case of the Bell Telephone Company? If in one week 100 new subscribers are accepted, 100 new telephones will have to be paid at once but after a few months that expense will be written off.

A \$6 or \$6.50 charge is made when a telephone is installed but that gives rise to paradoxes. I have a telephone at home at 3200 St. Vallier east, in Quebec city, and another one at 576 St. Vallier. One moves but keeps the same telephone number and asks the company to change one's address in the telephone directory and to register the telephone in the name of Lucien instead of Georges; I was then told that such a change could be made, that it would be the same as having a new telephone, and that I would have to pay another \$6.50. That is utterly ridiculous. Last year the number at 3200 St. Vallier was 172; the city changed the civic number but the subscriber was not charged any surplus at that time. However, there is a charge if you change Christian names.

Mr. Chairman, whenever things like that happen, it makes me a little angry. If in order to change a number some moving about were required; but no, they can remain at their desk and correct the name and address in the telephone directory, and the Bell Telephone Company collects \$13 or \$14 immediately. This is a net profit, not a gross one.

We would have many other things to say on this matter but our time is limited, 20 minutes only; so we must merely attend to the most pressing things.

What I think is most disgusting today, is that we have to discuss a bill like this one, whereas we could have allowed our hon. friends to keep on speaking about the flag—and they enjoy it indeed—and we could thus have saved the house a whole hour which would have enabled us to vote sooner.

[Text]

**Mr. Mackasey:** Mr. Chairman, I think about a month ago somebody referred to this hour as the telephone hour. I believe it is an

[Mr. Plourde.]

appropriate name. It not only signifies the number of hours that have been devoted to this bill but I suppose it is an indirect compliment to the type of advertising that has made the Bell Telephone Company famous. In the many sessions during which I have listened to the debate surrounding this particular bill, I have heard outlined all of the sins of which the Bell Telephone Company is supposed to be guilty. During the earlier part of the debate I heard reference made to a point which I am not going to pursue because it was adequately refuted, namely that the Bell Telephone Company has been unfair to French speaking Canadians in Quebec. I think the point was adequately refuted, principally by members who realize that the president of the Bell Telephone Company, Mr. Marcel Vincent, is an excellent example of the type of business people that the French speaking community of Canada can produce.

Second, Mr. Chairman, I think that—

**Mr. Grégoire:** Are you trying to make a racial issue of it?

**Mr. Mackasey:** I cannot say whether the hon. member is standing or sitting because basically there is not that much difference.

**Mr. Grégoire:** I was just asking whether you are going to make it a racial issue. You would be doing wrong if you did.

**Mr. Mackasey:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I apologize to the hon. member if I misunderstood his remarks. I think they were speculative.

The main charge made against the Bell Telephone Company is that it is big and that it is operating in a semi-monopolistic field. I do not feel it has anything to be ashamed of on either count. As I mentioned previously in debate, I can understand the philosophy of socialism and I respect those who believe in it. They feel that Bell is the type of company that should be crown operated, or placed under the jurisdiction of the federal government. I have no intention of debating the pros and cons of that philosophy but, Mr. Chairman, I do not think this hour is the appropriate time to bring forward the many grievances raised by the hon. member for York-Humber and others. There is a proper medium through which such grievances should be exposed, factually supported, or rejected by representatives of the company.

I do not always disagree with my good friend from York-Humber. I am one of those who are happy he did come back from his hunting trip in the north, and I think all of