

to raise. What plans are there for an improved bus service which at present is totally inadequate? It is a disgrace to the Canadian public. Are there plans to replace it? I understand that the new manager is very sympathetic towards the proposal to eliminate the bus system altogether. Buses are overcrowded, uncomfortable and not properly maintained. They are cheap, inexpensive and dirty.

Do the CN people have plans to eliminate the bus service and to replace it with an efficient dayliner service? If they are not going to provide a dayliner service, will they provide a decent bus system across our province so that our public can travel in comfort? These are the questions I want to raise. I want to see a full and thorough investigation made into the situation at Bishop's Falls which is the big, central Newfoundland centre of rail activity. What plans do they have for providing branch systems, bus systems if necessary, down to Lewisporte and Twillingate Island where the system of transportation is inadequate? What plans do they have, for example, for freight distribution in central Newfoundland? Last year the matter of freight distribution was raised and I can tell a story on this.

I have had many discussions with the general manager of CN, Mr. MacMillan from Montreal. He is a very understanding person. I presented a case on behalf of the residents of Bishop's Falls. I told him that that community, which was the centre of rail activity in central Newfoundland, should be considered as the distribution centre for central Newfoundland because of the CN involvement over the years. I received a very sympathetic hearing. I presented the case on behalf of the people there, the town council, the chambers of commerce, the churches. Every individual in that part of the province presented his case to me and offered a suggestion for freight distribution. If there is going to be a centre of rail activity or freight distribution, Bishop's Falls is the logical place for it; it was the centre of railway activity down through the years.

● (3:00 p.m.)

We presented our case, and luckily for us we were told that the thing had not yet been finalized, but we understood that some moves had been made with respect to the purchase of property in another town. It is a disappointment that such moves have been made. As I say, the decision has not yet been finalized, but from remarks made in the community of Bishop's Falls we understand that plans have been very carefully and very subtly completed not to have the distribution of freight take place through the town of Bishop's Falls.

If this is a fact, it is a real tragedy because it has been a railway town since the beginning of rail service in that province. It had a population of approximately 5,000 at one time, almost totally dependent upon railways. It was hit a very critical economic blow by the abandonment of railway passenger service. Now, when it comes time for Canadian National to set up more modern types of equipment for the distribution of freight and goods through the province, that centre is not being considered. As I say, Mr. Speaker, it is a real tragedy.

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### *Canadian National Railways*

I have talked with railway men there, and I have never seen their morale so low. I do not think Canadian National should be permitted by the government to carry on activity of this nature sneakily and surreptitiously, undermining our communities and making plans calculated to be carried out without full public involvement and awareness. This is a very serious situation.

**Mr. Pepin:** And a very serious statement, too.

**Mr. Lundrigan:** The minister says it is a very serious statement. Yes, Mr. Speaker, it has to be a serious statement when the situation is this serious. If all Canadians were of my mind, Canadian National would not get away with this kind of activity. If the government were interested in protecting the rights of citizens against Crown corporations which assume omnipotent power, the Canadian National would not get away with this.

The Canadian Transport Commission has assumed a role of total omnipotence. It seems that one dare not question the decision of the chairman of that commission. If one raises this matter with the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) he will say it is sub judice or will use some other legal jargon. What is the phrase that means the Canadian Transport Commission is omnipotent? In any event, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Transport Commission has been given total power so that it may go ahead without the government having to assume the responsibility for the public outcry. The government shifted the responsibility, the commission assumed it and now the government says the commission can take the blame. In that way the Canadian government gets out from under; I think there is a legal term for that somewhere. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, there are all kinds of terms for it.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Just bad government.

**Mr. Lundrigan:** I now wish to deal with the matter of air transport. Air Canada has been moving toward the introduction of a regional carrier system in Canada. Before I get into that point I want to say that this is in no way a criticism of the new air service that has been introduced in Atlantic Canada. Eastern Provincial Airways provides a system of air travel in Atlantic Canada. I have never heard one Canadian who has anything but praise for the passenger service it provides in Atlantic Canada. But now we have a move toward the integration of Air Canada and Eastern Provincial Airways into a regional carrier system in the Atlantic provinces. I say it is the responsibility of the Minister of Transport to stand up in his place in this House and tell in some detail what are the plans and implications of this system, so that we can get public reaction to it.

I know there are many Air Canada employees today who are uncertain of their future. Hon. members will remember the many people in Air Canada who woke up one morning a couple of months ago and found themselves without a job. Some of them were men with 20 and 25 years' service and experience. They did not know what was happening. They did not know because this