

Railway Act

am not so sure that we have seen very many concrete examples of the wonderful job the Transport Commission was supposed to do. By the time they get through dealing with railway complaints it is doubtful whether they will have time to go into the matters covered by this bill.

I hope that the many people involved in this type of business will receive notice well in advance so that they will have ample opportunity to prepare and present their cases before the committee. There will be arguments for and against the bill, but there is so much money involved—the minister indicated \$90 million in one case and \$100 million in the other—that I hope everyone involved will have enough time to prepare a case to help the committee examine the subject thoroughly before this bill finally becomes the law of the land. We look forward to a thorough and adequate discussion of this legislation at the committee stage.

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, in saying a few words on this Bill C-11 I am not interested in wire service or Telesat; I am only interested in getting the normal means of communication for the people I represent. The government can repeal paragraphs or sections of the Act to their heart's content, but it is obvious to me that if tolls are to be changed or approved or revised, there must be a service in the first place. I submit respectfully that this is not the case in the district I represent. The name of the Canadian Transport Commission is not one which is bandied about in a complementary way in the province of Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, because they continue to treat with apathy the services they are charged with providing for my province. I need not repeat statements about the action taken with regard to the railway passenger service in the province which has denied normal transportation services to many Newfoundlanders.

With regard to telephone service, another form of communication and one which falls within the responsibility of this Board, one would not believe the type of system that exists in many of the communities in the province. There are far too many communities limited to one telephone in a home or in a CNT office, where people have to travel as much as 10 to 14 miles to use it—that is if one is lucky enough to find the phone in working order.

And then again, Mr. Speaker, there are some communities which are really well supplied with CNT service. Some communities

[Mr. Howe.]

have 10 or 12 phones supplied by the good graces of the CTC, but they are all on the same line. Picture, if you will, Mr. Speaker, a community in Newfoundland in which someone gets sick and one has to call a doctor. The lack of medical services is one thing but the means of communication necessary to contact help in the case of an emergency is the responsibility of the department which controls the CNT. To deny any Canadian the right to this service is a shameful situation. Reference has been made to changes in tolls but in the isolated communities of Newfoundland the Company does not charge a toll, they charge by the pole. If anyone wants telephone services extended the charge is \$85 a pole. So, why are we so concerned with amendments? Why is the CNT looking for approval or revisions? When is the government going to live up to their promise of equal opportunity for all Canadians regardless of where they live?

May I quote a few examples? I offer the little community of Trout River which is lucky enough to have a few telephones, but if people want to call an adjacent community about five miles away they have to use long distance. Then, there is the community just a stone's throw away from the city of Corner Brook where the storekeeper who has the phone has to pay 40 cents every time he wants to make a call. This is the latest type of telephone, Mr. Speaker, a radio-telephone. In this age of the satellite, Mr. Speaker, the government does not hesitate to spend millions upon millions of dollars to communicate around the world, but they evidently are not aware of the denial of the rights of many thousands of Newfoundlanders who do not have the basic necessity, a telephone.

And now we are coming up with a new scheme which is called Information Canada. This agency is going to inform all Canadians what the government is doing. Well, this Information Canada is not going to be of much help to many parts of Newfoundland, certainly not through the use of the telephone. But these people are getting information from their members of parliament because they know how to communicate directly with the people they represent. The Newfoundland members are interested in offering the involvement and participation that this government does not care to communicate to neglected Newfoundlanders.

I hesitate to criticize the Minister of Communications (Mr. Kierans) in this regard, Mr. Speaker, but when one faces the daily frustrations resulting from the neglect of one's district through the failure to provide the