

*Supply—Transport*

An investigation would also enlighten us on the underhand dealings going on in Fort William and Port Arthur where the telephone utility, which is adequate and controlled by the municipal authorities, is constantly assaulted by the company.

An investigation on the dealings of the company in Dryden could enlighten us on the usefulness of the expenditures which were made. The same applies to a great number of areas. Only an investigation that would compel the company to appear before a committee of parliament would inform the population.

The company complains of having to support substantial development expenditures. An investigation would show whether the people from central Quebec and Ontario, especially where the telephone service is inadequate, are not paying for the invasions of the company.

The activities of the company in respect of the council of Jaffray-Melick, in Ontario, where the company set up lines without asking permission, should also be investigated.

We should also investigate and find out whether the profits of the company are not swallowed up by Northern Electric.

A quick survey around Montreal, Toronto and other large cities would reveal that the subscribers at Ste. Martine, Howick, St. Urbain, and a good many localities barely 30 miles from Montreal, are still using manual telephone sets in this the twentieth century. The issue was raised by Montreal newspapers, especially by *La Presse*. And how is the company operating where it will not even give adequate service?

Let us compare the revenues derived by the city of Kenora from its 4,000 long distance telephones—the Bell Telephone Company being excluded from that district—with the ones the city of Fort William or Port Arthur gets with more than 18,000 telephones, in an area covered by the Bell Telephone Company.

Let us read once more Arnold Edinborough's special report in *Saturday Night* on the waste of money involved in the construction of the mid-Canada line. You will see that the building company was the Bell Telephone Company and what a deadly feud developed between this company, converted all of a sudden into a contracting company—which is a line quite removed from its own—and the specialized services of the army and air force. An inquiry would perhaps disclose what objectives the Bell Telephone Company had in mind. Hundreds of millions of dollars were wasted.

What is the Bell company doing in Fort Francis, Ontario where each side of the streets is provided with a double service and where the calls are long distance calls even between citizens of the same area or community?

Since it is impossible to operate a school bus without permission from a provincial board; since all public services, are supervised and controlled by government agencies, whether it be shipping, air transport, radio or communications, it is unthinkable that there should be nothing of the sort for the Bell Telephone Company which hangs on to an 1880 charter giving fantastic power in 1961.

The Canadian Independent Telephone Association is a responsible organization with members all over Canada. At the October annual meeting in Toronto, a resolution was passed appointing a committee of three members one of whom is Mr. G. Laganier. That committee is preparing a brief asking outright for a revision of those obsolete laws which today are complicating things, and requesting that the government give full and total jurisdiction to the board of transport commissioners for Canada.

We have had enough of such arrogance.

Public interest requires that such legal status be ended, certain powers were given this company for the benefit of Canada as a whole. For a long time now, it has not been discharging its duty to this country. It has not even been discharging it in Quebec and Ontario, except in larger centers. Even today, it neglects less profitable territories, even around large cities, in order to increase its revenues from long distance calls in the far north, knowing that other companies are operating there.

The Quebec and Ontario independent companies, whether private or municipally-owned, operate about 700 centrals and the Bell company 7,400. The telephone systems in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland are independent from the company. The legend of the big company has lasted long enough. It left Alberta in 1906 and Manitoba in 1908, and it never existed in the other provinces. So, for a long time it has not been working "for the benefit of Canada" as a whole. The time has come to have this situation reflected in the law of the country and to restore some order in that field. Let us not forget that in 1885, the act protecting the Bell company was repealed for a time, and for a very simple reason: resentment had been stirred by the