

*Transport and Communications*

government would rather foist the responsibility on the committee which was set up to look into this transportation problem. I should like to read in part section 53(1) of the Railway Act:

The Governor in Council may at any time in his discretion, either upon petition of any party, person or company interested, or of his own motion, and without any petition or application, vary or rescind any order, decision, rule or regulation of the Board—

That is as far as I shall read. It goes on with other language having to do with something not connected with this point. I suggest that the members of the cabinet, if they were sincere about dealing with the transportation problems of the people of Newfoundland, would initiate on their own an appeal to set aside the ruling of the Canadian Transport Commission.

In view of the fact that a committee was set up to go to the Atlantic provinces to look into the transportation situation, I believe the government has done a disservice to the people of Newfoundland on their 20th anniversary, as was mentioned yesterday by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath). I suggest that surely deep down they should realize that they should do something of their own volition instead of waiting for something else to happen in this regard. They must realize that on the very same day the committee filed its report to which exception is taken, at least in respect of a part of it, the cabinet itself introduced a bill extending the freeze on maritime freight rates. I wonder whether it was a coincidence that both these things appeared on the same day.

At public expense a committee went to the Atlantic provinces to look into their transportation problems, including maritime freight rates, and on the same day it made its report the government introduced a bill. I believe this is beyond mere coincidence. The same thing applies in respect of the causeway. Many briefs were presented to us while we were down there. We all know the feelings of the people there concerning the causeway. Yet the government did not have the grace to await our return before making its announcement in respect of the causeway. This is a black mark against the government which will not be forgotten by the people of the Atlantic provinces.

I should like to conclude by imploring the members of the Committee on Transport and Communications to realize that they have a responsibility to the people who presented briefs to us during our tour of the Atlantic

provinces. If we now to fail to make a report of any kind whatsoever, I suggest that every citizen of the country should say that never again do they want a committee to tour their area to find out at first hand what is going on. The people who presented briefs to us were sincere. They had been waiting for a year to do so. Many of them considered that the appeal they made to the committee was logical. Surely no one in Canada should have to be a lawyer to the nth degree, or whatever the legal terminology may be, to explain a situation, nor should we expect a citizen of this country to have to dig into the law books in order to become a part of this country.

I say that the people of this nation are entitled to far more consideration than the house leader has given them by asking the committee at this time to change what we agreed to unanimously, and the point should be made very clear that it was a unanimous decision of the committee. There may have been two members who did not vote but the decision of the committee was unanimous.

I should also like to mention the fact that the last motion with regard to the submission of the report was made by myself, in which the chairman was asked to report our concurrence in that report. The chairman was quite willing to report our concurrence in that report until it was held up by the house leader. I think this is a slam against the chairman and against every committee. I suggest that the Committee on Transport and Communications should be abolished completely if this is the treatment that can be expected from the cabinet.

• (4:20 p.m.)

**Mr. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce):** Mr. Speaker, I should first like to deal with the point of order raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). In this regard I should like to introduce an amendment to the motion. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Gloucester (Mr. Breau):

That the said report be not now concurred in but that it be recommitted to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications with instruction that they delete from the report the paragraph thereof which reads as follows:

"Your Committee recommends that the Order of the Canadian Transport Commission, authorizing the Canadian National Railways to suspend rail passenger service in Newfoundland on April 5, 1969, be left in abeyance, until your Committee tables its complete report in respect to this question."

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I understand there is already an