

The Address—Mr. Carter

they were not permitted even to enjoy a meal of turrs. These restrictions are causing them a very severe hardship and adding to their misery, because they are being deprived of the only source of fresh meat that is available to them. I therefore bring this problem again to the attention of the ministers concerned and urge them to effect a speedy, satisfactory and permanent solution.

There is one other matter of great importance to my constituents that I must bring to the attention of this house because, after five years of fruitless effort, all other means of dealing with it have been exhausted. I refer to the Canadian National telegraph service to the small outport communities of Newfoundland. Prior to confederation the postal and telegraph services were combined under a single department of the Newfoundland government and had been built up to a high peak of efficiency within the limits of the financial resources at the government's disposal. After confederation this sensible and efficient organization, which had been created through a process of trial and error to meet the special needs and conditions of Newfoundland, was destroyed. It was split up. The postal services were taken over by the federal Post Office Department, and the telegraph services were transferred to the Canadian National Telegraphs.

It was expected that the Canadian National Telegraphs, with their greater financial resources, would implement the plans which even in 1949 the Newfoundland government had under consideration for the improvement and the expansion of those services. Instead, the service has steadily deteriorated until now it is little better than the Indian smoke signals or the African tom-toms, and it has about the same degree of privacy. Land line telephones are housed in wooden booths which, instead of being soundproof, amplify the voice so that it is clearly audible to everyone standing in the office lobby. Messages being transmitted and received over the wireless telephone can be picked up by anyone within a radius of 20 or 30 miles who cares to turn on his radio. In some areas the local Canadian National Telegraphs telephone has a greater listening audience than "Ma Perkins" or many of the soap operas. It is seldom possible for more than four or five people to listen in on a rural telephone line, but the audience of the Canadian National telephone is limited only by the number of radios within range. Consequently businessmen are forced to carry their messages by boat to the nearest Morse operator, in order to prevent confidential information being overheard by their competitors.

If one is travelling along the coast by boat it is an absolute waste of money to send a telegram on ahead. I proved this for myself over and over again as I travelled through my riding. Day after day, before leaving port in the morning, I would send a telegram to the place where I planned to spend the night, and then after travelling all day at 8 knots speed against wind and tide I would invariably arrive at my destination ahead of the telegram.

This situation is due partly to obsolete equipment which had been in use for about 20 years or longer prior to confederation, and partly to the stupidity of Canadian National Telegraphs policies and regulations. Although present facilities are not adequate to handle even normal day traffic, the Canadian National Telegraphs insist on cluttering it up still further by accepting long night letters for offices which have no night operators and which therefore must be transmitted only by day. The effect is the same as giving a reduced rate, but if that is the object the sensible thing to do is reduce the rate on normal telegrams and thus speed up the traffic.

Canadian National Telegraphs regulations give priority to stock market quotations, and as a result urgent telegrams, which should have been delivered the day before, or the day before that, are delayed still further while the local operator in the tiny village is kept occupied copying down lengthy stock market reports which are not of the slightest interest to anyone, and least of all to the poor fishermen.

I bring this matter to the attention of the house, because if the Canadian National Telegraphs persist in pursuing their present policy the time is not far distant when the whole telegraph service in Newfoundland is going to collapse for lack of qualified Morse operators. Before confederation every Morse operator trained his children and his relatives to transmit and receive Morse messages. The treatment they have received at the hands of Canadian National Telegraphs has sickened them so much that they do that no longer. As a result combined offices, where the postmaster is also the telegrapher, are now often closed down for a week at a time while a frantic search is conducted to find a qualified Morse operator.

Before long the scarcity of Morse operators will have a serious effect upon the postal services. In order to keep these services in operation it will be necessary to separate the duties of the postmaster and the telegrapher and appoint a separate individual to each job. This will result in the collapse of both services because the salary paid for the combined duties averages only about \$2,000 a year, and