

under the terms of union, about which I spoke a few moments ago, Newfoundland was "guaranteed" a rail service between Port aux Basques and North Sydney and, second, that the Government of Canada assumed ownership of the Newfoundland railway. That service was not promised to Newfoundland, it was not held out as a carrot, it was guaranteed a railway service.

On the one hand Bill C-88 does a number on the gulf ferry service. However, what did the report say about the railway? Let me find the specific recommendation because I would not want to mislead the House. The first recommendation indicated that an agreement in principle would be reached with the Government of Newfoundland to phase out the Newfoundland railway in an orderly manner. In other words, close down, shut up, pull up the rails, burn up the ties, and consign the engines to the nearest museum. Gone was the Newfoundland railway; vanished in a moment.

Can one imagine 600 miles of track which the morning after looked like they took a direct hit from a nuclear weapon, vaporized? They not only plan a Chernobyl-type eradication of the gulf ferry service, they will slowly poison that service or choke the life out of it slowly. They are showing no mercy at all, but with the railway they are being merciful, kind, and considerate. They will not drop a neutron bomb because that destroys people and not property. They will drop another kind of bomb which will destroy property and people.

● (1140)

There were 800 jobs in a province with 30 per cent unemployment associated with that railway and the Nielsen Task Force report is saying: "Shut it down". How effective have these gentlemen of the Genghis Khan school been in convincing some people in Newfoundland that they ought to stand while the warhead zooms in from outer space on a direct loop from the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa? How successful have they been?

We had the spectacle a few weeks ago in the Newfoundland legislature of the Premier of Newfoundland, who can normally be counted upon to be as rational as an unguided missile, and he was again true to form, saying, "I do not think our constitutional case for the railway is all that good. I think we might get laughed out of court. I am for retaining the railway. I want to keep it. In fact, I want to see it upgraded and modernized, but with respect to our constitutional case, I think we might get laughed out of court". Here we had the Premier of Newfoundland telling Newfoundlanders that they do not have a constitutional right to their railway at the same time the Government of Canada, in the same document that recommends closing it down, acknowledges a Newfoundland constitutional right to the railway. It is not a matter of opinion, it is acknowledged, Mr. Speaker.

The Government of Ottawa has been saying to the Government of Newfoundland that it will either have some money for a reduced level of ferry service, or it will have some money for a railway service; it can have that, and money for nothing else.

*Marine Atlantic Inc.*

Or, if it wants some money for highway or money for other modes of transportation that every other province in Canada takes as their right of Canadians, it can but it is either/or. It is a situation that if it wants money for highways it has to give up the railway; it has to reduce the ferry service.

**Mr. Forrestall:** That is ridiculous.

**Mr. Tobin:** It is ridiculous. There is no other province in Canada that I know of that is being told: "Gentleman, it is either a highway or a railway. You cannot have both. It is either a Gulf ferry service or a railway. You cannot have both." Newfoundlanders are wondering what distinguishes us from other Canadians that we should receive this special select treatment by the Government of Canada. We pondered that question for months. I have not found an answer.

As a Canadian first, who comes from Newfoundland, I was never made aware at any time during my upbringing that somehow being a Canadian in one part of Canada distinguished you from being a Canadian in another part of Canada. Nobody ever said to me when I was learning about this country that we were anything but a nation where unity was found in diversity and where diversity was reconciled by national trends in services and rights that we all have in common, be we black or white, Protestant or Catholic, tall or short, from the centre, from the west or from the east. All of us as Canadians expect a number of services and rights that we hold common in this country.

We understand as well that when you have certain services and rights accorded to you as a Canadian, you have as well certain responsibilities. We in Newfoundland appreciate that. That is why the vast majority of Newfoundlanders have always believed in the whole debate about offshore oil and gas, now reflected in legislation, that if it is there in the multibillion barrel reservoirs to be developed, whenever the time is appropriate, it is a resource that belongs to all the country, not just to those who live in Newfoundland.

As we embrace the concept that a resource off the shores of Newfoundland belong to the whole country, so too, Mr. Speaker, do we embrace the concept that we as Canadians who live in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia or PEI, have a right to the same kind of consideration of our needs as people who live anywhere else in the country. We should have the same right as the dairy farmers in Quebec and Ontario, the same right as the wheat farmers in western Canada who find themselves confronted with recession, the same right as the cedar shingle and shake workers in the great province of British Columbia who have just been dealt a devastating blow and who properly expect the Government to assist them in their dilemma and in their time of need.

Bill C-88 is not a Bill that seeks to bind this country together. It is not a Bill that provides the glue that keeps this country together. It is a Bill that was designed with an axe. It is a Bill that severs CN Marine. To some that is a ferry ride, a boat in which you go bobbing around the ocean. This service is the way people move themselves, their goods, their produce