

services with an eye to what we can afford, or with the idea of cutting our garment according to the cloth, but with a view to finding a little more cloth somewhere. In other words, developing our economic resources so that we can fulfill the needs and provide a special service for the country. I am not prepared to carry the debate any further, but I do suggest that throughout a discussion of this sort we must keep in mind the prime purpose of this assembly, and I suggest that we look at the whole question of transportation and communications bearing these four simple questions in mind....

Mr. Hollett Mr. Chairman, after that rather lengthy homily on the duties of this Convention I feel disposed to say a word. I feel that nearly every member has the same idea in mind, that all these reports are to be taken and criticised and torn apart, in order to give us some idea what the services are costing the treasury, and that is exactly what we came here for.... I agree with Mr. Newell entirely, but I do feel that we have to find out what we can with regard to these reports, and if there is something we don't like, and if there is something that should be added, I don't know why we should not do something about it.

Mr. Newell I do not know when these questions have to be answered — sometime, certainly, they must. Perhaps now is not the opportune moment to go too deeply into that phase of it.... I do not want anybody to infer we should not criticise anything in these reports....

Mr. Smallwood There is another side to it all. Mr. Newell is dealing with the Convention itself — what the Convention ought to do, and with him we all agree.

The Education Committee brought in its report and we debated it here for a day. Perhaps we ought to have debated it longer. The Forestry Committee report we debated a day, or part of a day and they are bringing in a supplementary report. It deals with one of the basic resources of the country. Now in comes the Transportation Committee's report. It deals not with basic productive industries at all, but with one of the big spending departments of the government. As these three have come in, and as the other six will come in and are read out, the country hears them. The country as a whole has no opportunity of knowing what is in a report except when they hear it read on the air. Most of us, just by hearing

figures and statistics read are unable to grasp them, and that is the purpose of the debate, among other things, to bring home to the Newfoundland people — our masters, whose servants we are — information to pass on to them. One of the purposes of the debate is to bring out the information that is in the reports, cold-blooded and with no adjectives — for instance, note the model of restraint in "scandalously low salaries paid." In the main the reports are just factual; it is the debate which makes them live, that makes the facts and figures get up and dance. Suppose we adopt another method, suppose we brought in all nine reports and debated them; suppose we appointed a new committee — a report consolidation committee — to knock all reports into one. Suppose we slapped that at the country — there would be a lot of mental indigestion. If we give it report by report, the country and ourselves will understand it better. So when we make our recommendations at last, it will not hit the country between the eyes as a surprise: they will have foreseen it, they will have anticipated it. I know if you were to ask the average Newfoundlander to give you a one-minute description of the posts and telegraphs, not one could do it — they do not realise what a monumental thing it is. We are educating the people of Newfoundland while educating ourselves. We must always remember not to get lost in a forest of facts and statistics — always bearing in mind that what we want to know is this: what is it going to cost the future government of Newfoundland, and where are we going to find it? We do not want people to think we are bogged down in the forest of information we have gathered. We are doing it bit by bit and thrashing it out as we go along.

Mr. Higgins Before we get too far in the woods, and if Mr. Smallwood is out of them, I wonder if he would revert to a question I asked earlier. I wanted to know the Committee's opinion of the usefulness of the radio-telegraph as against the old land line and the comparative cost of both services. My own impression is that the present radio-telegraph service is very much slower, so far as individuals getting messages is concerned. It does not appear to have been gone into in the report.

Mr. Smallwood I am not evading that question. It is one that is going to cost the country a million dollars. It is dealt with in this rather voluminous