

Newfoundland

Mr. Claxton: I ask my hon. friend to note the opening words of section 33 which are as follows:

The following public works and property of Newfoundland shall become the property of Canada.

The purpose of this section is to transfer property and we felt that it should be provided for expressly.

Mr. Hazen: I notice that there is nothing in connection with the printing of money as provided for by section 91 of the British North America Act.

Mr. St. Laurent: No property connected with the exercise of that power had to be transferred.

Section 31 (f) agreed to.

Section 31 (g) agreed to.

On section (h)—*Geological, topographical, geodetic, and hydrographic surveys.*

Mr. Coldwell: Something should be done in connection with soil surveys which might be carried out in co-operation with the new government of Newfoundland. I know that in the west soil surveys have been of great value. While Newfoundland in large part may not have much soil, as I said the other day, the reports indicate the possibility of some agricultural development in western Newfoundland which might provide supplies of milk, vegetables and other products which are now imported. I would think that wherever possible soil surveys should be made. You cannot tell just by looking at soil what it will produce; the necessary surveys must be made.

Mr. St. Laurent: I think that is covered by the statement of questions and answers.

Mr. Coldwell: Is that inferred?

Mr. St. Laurent: Not in the express terms used by the hon. member, but it was stated that it would be the policy of the government to put at the disposal of the government of the island its technical advisers for the purpose of making such economic surveys or investigations as might be required.

Mr. Coldwell: I wanted to mention that particularly.

Section 31 (h) agreed to.

Section 31 (i), (j), (k) and (l) agreed to.

Section agreed to.

On section 32.

Mr. Dickey: This is a general clause dealing with transportation. One of the basic considerations in bringing about union was the economic development of Newfoundland for the benefit of the people of Newfoundland as well as for the general benefit of Canada. This

[Mr. Hazen.]

development can take place only when proper facilities are provided and it can be carried on only to the extent which those facilities will permit.

Trade between Newfoundland and Canada, particularly in the winter months, has depended particularly upon the transportation system of the maritime provinces. During the winter a heavy volume of freight passes through Halifax and North Sydney destined for Newfoundland, and the passenger traffic between Canada and Newfoundland passes almost exclusively through maritime ports.

Section 32 contains certain guarantees with respect to the operation and maintenance of transportation services within Newfoundland, and I should like to draw the attention of the committee and the government to the fact that the operation of this transportation system will depend upon the efficiency of the transportation system in the maritime provinces. The hoped-for increase in trade between Canada and Newfoundland will throw an additional burden upon a transportation system which is long overdue for improvement. In this regard I should like to quote briefly from the report of the Nova Scotia royal commission on development and rehabilitation of 1944, known as the Dawson report. I may say to the committee that I do not do so to frighten the people of Newfoundland. I think most of them have personal knowledge of the conditions which are described. Speaking of the railway line between Truro and Sydney, the report reads:

This section of the Canadian National is incredibly bad and will discourage the most hardened traveller, to say nothing of the tourist, who is supposed to travel for pleasure. The roadbed is rough; the delays are frequent and prolonged; the rolling stock is shabby and run down; the meals are poor. The Sydney-Halifax train does 239 miles in the stirring time of twelve and a half to fourteen and three-quarter hours, including stoppages, or from nineteen and a half to twenty-three miles an hour. In spring and winter trains commonly run from one to six hours late. Cape Bretoners may read about their good fortune in being born in an age of luxurious and rapid transportation, but so far as their own experience goes, these tales are purely legendary and bear no relation to everyday life.

With special reference to the handling of freight traffic, a matter which will be of extreme importance in the future, the report goes on to say:

The handling of freight is carried out on the same plane of efficiency. The curves are sharp and the grades are heavy, and the train must be broken up and ferried across the strait of Canso, with the inevitable result that freight charges are very high. The largest trainload a single locomotive can haul out of Sydney to Mulgrave is eighteen loaded cars, across the ferry eighteen cars loaded or light, from Mulgrave to Stellarton twenty cars loaded, from Stellarton to Truro twenty-five loaded cars, and the same number from Truro to Moncton. This compares with sixty-five to 100 loaded cars from Moncton west on the transcontinental, depending on the type of locomotive. Freight trains crossing the