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Committee Continues
 Continued from page 1

route from Mr. A. Lewis and the Murray Harbor - Murray River - Wood Islands route from Mr. Floyd Johnston. They had also bought the Montague - Charlottetown run from Mr. Marvin Johnston. He said he mentioned this to show that his company had never attempted to "push any operator off his route." Instead they had purchased the routes as well as pioneering ones of their own.

During the year 1950 his company carried 306,772 passengers over 508,567 miles of operation with a full passenger revenue of \$156,000. He thought it ridiculous to say that granting a franchise to the C.N.R. would not affect the I.M.T. The extra trips meant that some of the passengers would travel at a later hour and the loss of only one or two passengers would cut deeply into the mile revenue.

In answer to a question by Mr. Martin he said he saw no possibility of two bus lines operating. The assets of the company here were \$150,000, mostly rolling stock and equipment. Last year their loss was \$17,000 for the first six months. Mr. Clark suggested that if they were making losses like that he could not see why they were not glad to get out.

Mr. Bird replied that they had lost money at first with many companies but they had been built up and were now making a profit. He thought they could do the same here and in any event the I.M.T. was a good feeder line for S.M.T. He remarked that there now was an excellent through service to Montreal and Eastern United States points.

Owned by Mr. Irving

Under questioning he said the bus company was owned by Mr. Irving of the Irving Oil Company who also owned many other companies. Mr. Clark remarked that Mr. Irving might take a loss on the I.M.T. and perhaps make a million dollars in another line.

Mr. Bird said the connection with Irving Oil permitted the bus company to receive very advantageous prices on tires, oil and other lines. He also said of the losses mentioned that the regular profit and loss included normal depreciation.

Hon. B. St. John asked why the witness said he expected traffic to increase. Mr. Bird said it was because they had acquired many new routes, but he admitted the serious competition from private cars.

He admitted that the equipment here was probably not as good on some routes as on the mainland as there the buses are diesel powered and here they use gasoline. The average cost of a motor coach for I.M.T. is \$21,000 and for diesels it is \$33,000.

Mr. St. John noted a part of the brief wherein it was stated that if the competition suggested were permitted it should be with the stipulation that the I.M.T. be reimbursed for its losses to date. He asked "whom do you look for to do it?"

Mr. Bird said it did not matter but "it could come from the C.N.R." He added he felt they should get it as it was unfair to private industry to lose an investment through action of a Crown company. Asked about the major attitude of his company he said that they wanted the C.N.R. application rejected.

Operating Costs

Although last winter was one of the worst experienced they had retained their major employees and had paid the drivers a weekly amount to standby. He said their operating costs were over 40 cents per mile and were higher in winter. In order to improve earnings he had thought of acquiring some contracts to carry mail and thus establish new routes as the 15 to 18 cents per mile received would permit doing that. He had written to the Postmaster General Renfret about it but was told that a new truck service was starting here. The rates he quoted he said came from other bus companies who operated mail services. They could handle 32 cubic feet at 6 cents a mile; 60 cubic feet at 10 cents; and 90 cubic feet at 15 cents.

Mr. J. W. D. Campbell asked if the I.M.T. would improve the service to and from the Borden ferry and he said he thought they provided a fast service.

Under cross-examination by Mr. MacDougall, counsel for the C.N.R., he said the routes over which they operated were the main ones and they did not intend to operate on the others though they would if they had a mail subsidy. Mr. MacDougall made note of the contention that two buses could not operate over the same route and said it worked in Ontario.

Considered It Exclusive

He said they had their franchise from the Public Utilities Board and had always considered it an exclusive one. He could not recall if the word exclusive was in the franchise but he said he would file it with the Committee for study.

Mr. Bird said they certainly had no intention of ceasing operations despite losses. "We are going to stay in it. Our record would stay here even if the C.N.R. gets its franchise" until we are forced off the highway." He said they intend to fight for the business, but he did not think they could beat the C.N.R. He told the Committee that I.M.T. has 15 buses here and that no overhead of the I.M.T. was charged to the local company.

Mr. MacDougall remarked on part of the brief dealing with the railway strike and asked if the witness could guarantee that there would never be a strike on the I.M.T. The general manager did not believe he could but he could not foresee one.

He told Mr. MacDougall that the company did not want C.N.R. bus competition but had no objection to the train service. He admitted their desire to have no competition. The questioner reminded him that when bus operations started here the railway was in existence but the buses had

given no consideration to what would happen to C.N.R. traffic. He also wished to know if in asking for compensation the bus operators would be willing to compensate the railway for the passengers they had taken away. Mr. Bird said "No, it was not the same thing at all." He added there would be "no worry if you stay on the rails and not enter the bus business."

During the afternoon session Mr. Ray Still, manager of the I.M.T., said there was only a certain amount of traffic to move and if another company picked up just two passengers from Elmira to this city it cut deeply into I.M.T. income.

Mr. Stewart remarked that with no passenger trains running there would be more people travelling on the highway and the business could be split.

Mr. Still also said from 1937 to 1951 the company had paid approximately \$10,000 to the railway for each trip to the Borden pier at \$1.50 per trip.

Board of Trade Brief

While on the stand in the morning session Mr. A. Walthen Gaudet said the Charlottetown Board of Trade brief had been prepared following a meeting with railway officials. There was no shorthand reporter present taking notes, but when the minutes were read later they were unanimously adopted. However, he conceded that there might be a margin of error. He said it was not considered necessary to present the brief to the full Board of Trade as the Council was authorized to deal with the matter.

Mr. K. M. Martin, appearing for the I.M.T., asked if the recommendations made in the brief would still be made in view of the possible inaccuracies. The answer was yes. The Council felt that they were correct. Mr. W. F. A. Stewart said it appeared to him that the Council had only listened to one side of the matter and

Mr. Gaudet replied that they had made every effort to meet with the I.M.T. but had not been successful. He was asked by Hon. Keir Clark, member of the Committee, regarding the closing paragraph of the brief where it was mentioned that if the Government secured adequate assurances from the railway the Board would favor granting the franchises asked. Mr. Clark wanted to know what assurances were meant and how they were to be obtained. Mr. Gaudet said it had been suggested that such as were required could be written into a preamble to the franchise.

In reply to a question by Hon. W. E. Darby he said the Board had not made a study of the effect on the travelling public in particular instances, but had studied the problem in general. Mr. Darby expressed the opinion that such a responsible body as the Board of Trade would have made a thorough study instead of just recommending the change. Mr. Gaudet said that if every group presenting briefs had done that they would be doing the work of the Committee.

West Prince Sections

Mr. Darby asked him to look at the map in relation to the section of Prince County west of the railway line and asked what was to happen to the people there if a bus service were substituted. At present those desiring to travel can go to the nearest railway station to wait. He wondered if the Board had investigated similar situations all over the Island.

The brief said that though the bus employees would probably be Union men it would be a local union only and as such not affected by a general railway strike. Mr. Darby asked the witness if he were willing to accept that as an adequate safeguard. Mr. Gaudet admitted the difficulty involved and Mr. Darby suggested that perhaps that was one of the things meant in saying the Government

Many Activities Reviewed In Board Of Trade Report

Following are excerpts from the report submitted by Mr. J. Gordon MacDonald, acting president, at last night's annual meeting of the Charlottetown Board of Trade:

"During the year the Board continued to co-operate in every way possible with the Maritime Provinces Board of Trade, and were honoured in having one of their own members, Mr. F. W. Curtis, a past president of this Board, elected as President of that body. The highlight of the year in this regard was the opening up at Moncton of the first permanent secretariat of the Maritime Board, to which we look to greatly expand the Board of Trade movement.

"The Board was well represented at the annual meeting of that body held in Sydney last October and should seek further safeguards. Briefly called to the stand Mr. B. Graham Rogers said he could not state definitely who had instituted the original negotiations between the I.M.T. and C.N.R.

Mr. Keith MacKinnon, director of the Maritime Motor Transport, read a brief prepared by that body opposing the granting of a franchise. He traced the development of his own trucking business from 1933 on a local scale to extended operations outside the Province when ferry rates became cheaper. Chairman Stewart said he did not see what this had to do with the hearing and Mr. Peake said the point of the whole brief was transportation was "strangled" here until the monopoly was broken in 1941.

Mr. MacKinnon told the Railway Council that he had received authority at the annual meeting of his association to deal with the

Commission and the Board thereafter made submissions at both the general electric and telephone rate hearings. "We are indeed gratified that the dial system is at last to become a reality here in 1953," the report adds.

"Liaison during the year with the Charlottetown Junior Chamber of Commerce has been continued with the Board being represented at all their meetings. The Junior affiliate is congratulated in the report on their many activities in the interests of the City and Province.

A new system of liaison with the City Council has now been put into effect in that the Board has representatives at all regular City Council meetings. "At this time I would like to express our appreciation for the present City Council's support and interest in our work," Mr. MacDonald stated. "We in turn pledge our own continued co-operation and will strive to continue to work with them in all matters for the progress of our City.

"We have appreciated also the fine co-operation given to us on so many occasions by the Premier and his government during the past year.

"In order to serve better our members, a questionnaire was prepared and distributed during the

Continued on page 15

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