

Adjournment Debate

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY—SITE FOR DUMPING OF
GARBAGE FROM METRO TORONTO

Mr. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo):

Mr. Speaker, on February 2 I asked the following question of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) as reported at page 907 of *Hansard*:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Three weeks ago, in response to a question from the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham, the Minister of Transport undertook the investigate and report back to the House on the location of the site to be used by Canadian Pacific Railway for the dumping of 400,000 tons of metro Toronto garbage annually for the next 15 years. Has the minister investigated this and can he report to the House which site is the prime site under consideration and the locations of the other five or six sites being considered by the railway?

The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis) chose to respond to my question with the following answer:

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might answer that question. I have discussed this matter at length with the minister of the environment for Ontario. It is substantially a matter for the provincial authorities.

Since the time I spoke with the minister in the House about this matter, CP Railway have made the announcement that they have not decided not to go ahead with the Minto township dump site, but that plans to put one into Hope township near Port Hope are under way. This is a matter of great concern to the people of Hope township, just as it was for the people of Minto township. Certainly a great sight of relief was heaved by most of the people in our area when we discovered that this dump site was not going to be forced on us.

Since that time an article has appeared in the *Mount Forest Confederate* which indicates we may not be completely off the hook yet. In the Thursday, March 1 edition of the *Mount Forest Confederate* there appear the following three paragraphs:

Barbara Murray, full time worker for Derail Dumps Today, feels that the group may set be in for a fight with CPR over garbage. She formed her opinion after talking to CP officials at a four-day information exhibition in Hope township.

It has been rumoured for several months that CP wanted to establish a land fill site in Minto township. The rail company announced last week that they would be asking the Ministry of the Environment for permission to operate a site in Hope township about 55 miles east of Toronto.

Speaking with John Cox, public relations representative for CP, she learned they may apply for a site in Minto if the proposal in Hope does not go well.

This is a matter which still concerns our area. We believe that it is the right of small municipalities to determine for themselves the kind of developments that take place in their own communities. We believe that a large and powerful corporation like CP Railway does not have the right to ride roughshod over the wishes of local citizens, who should be fully consulted about such matters.

We also believe that CP Railway have been extremely negligent. They have been extremely secretive about their plans, and only told the people of Hope township what they had in mind for them after they had prepared a massive public relations presentation. At no time did they really level with the people of Minto township. People may now wonder whether Minto township is off the hook and whether this debate we are having tonight is still

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

relevant. To me it is very relevant. It raises much broader issues than merely the future of Minto township; it raises questions as to the role of the Department of the Environment in regulating environmental matters in this country.

The minister seemed to feel that this matter was strictly within provincial jurisdiction. I disagree. I believe in the case of Minto township there is a possibility that the fishery may have been polluted—section 33 of the Fisheries Act gives the federal government responsibility for fisheries, pollution—and to the people in Minto township it is an important matter. I also believe that there is a possibility that water systems could be polluted which ultimately flow into international territory, so the federal government should show an interest there too.

Beyond that, it is the federal government, not the municipal or provincial authorities, who is responsible for making sure that good corporate citizenship is shown by the great train companies in this country. This they have not done. The train companies have shown extremely poor faith in dealing with the people in my area. They have closed down train passenger services in my area. They have allowed their rights-of-way to go to weed, to the detriment of farmers' fields, and they have not shown any concern to keep up fences along the rights-of-way. This is symptomatic of the way that CP and CN view the people of this country. The federal government has responsibility for making sure they act as good corporate citizens.

Beyond that, there is the question whether the Department of the Environment is to be construed as anything but a simple piece of window-dressing for the government. We all know it has very little responsibility north of the sixtieth parallel, for example. If you get north of that area the responsibility is that of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

There is also the question of what is being done in southern Canada. It is very little. The federal government has shown little initiative and little imagination in this matter. For example, the province of Ontario is quite willing to go ahead with massive projects in conjunction with the municipalities, the federal government and corporations in order to get to work in recycling the projects which could prove valuable for the whole of this country. The provincial government is willing to free the money for this, but the federal government has proved to be very lax in this regard and has shown very little initiative in providing any leadership.

We are also concerned because in many small municipalities the question of sewage treatment is a matter of life or death. Often the municipalities are not able to grow unless they can put in proper sewage facilities. The municipalities do not have the money to do this. The government of Ontario has come through with money for this, but the federal government has once again shown it has little interest.

I believe this is an area where the federal government could be active. As we enter the next decade we will have to be more and more concerned about making peace with the environment, if we are still concerned about the sort of quality of life our children will inherit. I think there is no other area in this country where the federal govern-