

Supply—Transport

three fields within his jurisdiction, mainly cable television and others. I am surprised he has not outlined to parliament some of those things he hopes to do in the national transportation field, particularly in view of the fact he will be leaving this department. Surely we should be given an outline of government policy so that we can consider it now, rather than having to go through the same considerations we have undertaken in the last five or six days.

During this debate we have touched upon a number of things, not the least of which is passenger travel throughout Canada. One of the most novel worth-while proposals I have heard in this regard is the one just made by the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway. A great number of long-time employees of the railway companies were issued lifetime passes. The value of these passes has now been cut in half and these people must now pay half fare. I am sure the hon. lady for Vancouver-Kingsway will not oppose the suggestion that the government institute a policy which would allow these long service pass holders to travel without cost.

Surely the minister has come to the conclusion as a result of this debate that the majority of members would like to see the government adopt a national transportation policy. We in Canada should be ashamed because of those things we have allowed the Board of Transport Commissioners to do in respect of passenger travel. Let us consider for a moment the abandonment by the Canadian National Railways of sleeper service from North Bay to Ottawa. I remember when I was first elected that that train provided a reasonably decent mode of travel. All the traffic originating in northern Ontario and northern Quebec made use of this service in travelling to Ottawa and Montreal. This area represents probably one tenth of the entire area of Canada. It was serviced by the Ontario Northland Railway to North Bay, at which point these people transferred to the trans-Canada services operated by both the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National. All the traffic originating in the northern part of northwestern Ontario, northeastern Ontario and northwestern Quebec used these facilities to travel south.

At one time the people of northern Ontario and Quebec could catch a train, take a sleeper and travel south. First of all the railways abandoned sleeper service at Swastika, because it cost \$200 to rent a pullman car and

[Mr. Peters.]

move it over these rails. Eventually they cut off the service at Englehart, another division point, and eventually at North Bay itself. At that time if you were travelling north you had to get up at seven o'clock in the morning, leave the sleeper car and travel by coach the rest of the trip. Shortly after that you could not obtain sleeper service at all.

• (8:50 p.m.)

One of the reasons for abandoning this sleeper service is that the Canadian National Railways made a very bad blunder when it purchased a lot of old sleeping cars from a defunct United States railway company. These cars were not suitable for use in northern Ontario. They did not put heat on both sides of the car in the winter and these cars were not equipped for operating in our climate. They had so much trouble and found themselves without the necessary equipment. This is true, Mr. Chairman, and I believe every member who has spoken on this subject has indicated that we do not have the equipment to operate passenger service in this country. This is the reason for the abandonment of lines.

Last week I was toying with the idea, and perhaps I will be able to accomplish it, of getting the people who produce "This Hour Has Seven Days" to bring their cameras and accompany me on the train from northern Ontario and northern Quebec into the town of North Bay. I should like these people to board Canadian National train 104 and shoot pictures during the night in this one coach on a freight train which has a number of express cars. I am quite sure the Canadian public would be disgusted with the railway and the Board of Transport Commissioners in allowing this train to run at all. Either get rid of the damned thing and provide passenger service in an alternate fashion, or put on a service that is worth while. On this train there is no sleeper, there are not enough seats for most of the people travelling and quite often they have to stand. In addition, there is no diner and there are no passenger facilities of any description. This car has been crammed with passengers on the many occasions I have ridden on it. The seats in the coach are not the reclining type; the cars are much too old to have this amenity.

If the minister really wants to do something by which the Department of Transport can be well remembered he should face up to the transportation problem. Let us do something about the railways. I am not opposed to