

Transportation

Ontario. If certain lines that have been abandoned were in existence today we would be using them to capacity. One line which ran north from Toronto up to Lake Simcoe was abandoned, and had it not been it would remove today a lot of the traffic congestion on the highways.

Slum areas are costing a lot of public money in industrial areas. These sprawling suburban areas are getting completely out of control due to the population explosion. If the trend continues throughout the country, 5 per cent of our population will be living in the rural areas and the other 95 per cent in cities and manufacturing centres. Yet in the great society which we talk about it is estimated that 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the population should live outside the cities.

We shall have to build new towns miles away from cities. I envisage towns like the city of Canberra in Australia, a beautiful city. Those who have visited it know it has no industry. It is the site of the parliament buildings and is a clean, wholesome area in which to live.

I do not believe we have enough railway lines at present in Ontario. We need all that we have, not only to carry freight but to carry people. Commuter trains will be a major factor in transportation, very shortly. Our new towns must be built in locations where land is cheaper, water sources plentiful and air pollution at a minimum. We must start planning for them now, and they must include proper recreational facilities because workers are going to be enjoying more and more leisure time.

The congested areas of the industrial complex of Toronto, which holds roughly 3 million people, needs a rapid transit system. Its problems are duplicated in a minor way in other cities across Canada. Good transportation is necessary so that people can live outside cities in clean, pleasant surroundings in which they can bring up their children. We should be planning now.

Mr. MacEwan: Mr. Chairman, I would draw the attention of the committee to the study which is being made on certain transport rates in the Atlantic area. In reply to one of my questions a few days ago, the Minister of Transport said that this study would be completed in March, and it is my hope that in 1968 legislation will be presented to this house which will be important and advantageous to the Atlantic area.

As hon. members know, transportation is the lifeline of the Atlantic area. It is most

important to my province of Nova Scotia, and particularly to my county of Pictou in their efforts to attract secondary industries, and in fact several secondary industries have been established in Pictou during the last few years. During this debate at least two members asked me whether this bill was important. They told me it was not important to their part of the country, and I believe they represent a certain area in Ontario. I replied that it was most important to my province and to the whole Atlantic area.

The question of port parity for Halifax, Saint John and throughout the maritimes has been adequately dealt with by my two colleagues from Halifax and the hon. member for Saint John-Albert. As a result, the minister awakened from a deep sleep and early this week submitted an amendment to this legislation which meets part of our wishes, but does not go all the way. As a result, we shall be watching this legislation to see its effects on the maritime area.

● (9:10 p.m.)

At the moment I am concerned about two applications made by the C.N.R. during the last few weeks for the closing of two stations in my constituency, and the removal of the agents from those stations. This is the first move by the C.N.R. to push the thin edge of the wedge into the economy of that area. The two stations are River John and Merigomish. It occurs to me that the C.N.R. might have waited until the present legislation had been completed. Instead of that, these applications were made. This is particularly important to the River John area. The reason for this is that about three years ago an application was made to cut out a part of what is known as the short line in my constituency which runs from Oxford Junction to the town of Stellarton by omitting the trackage from Tatamagouche in the area of my hon. friend from Colchester-Hants to Scotsburn in the county of Pictou. This, in other words as we might say down east, would have taken the guts out of the short line. Undoubtedly this move to close the River John station and to take the agent from there is a first move to reinforce the application which will be forthcoming by the Canadian National Railways.

It is my belief that no hearing on these applications should be heard until the present legislation is passed and the new act comes into effect. Suggestions have been made that the new act has nothing to do with the closing of stations or the removal of agents. There is one section in this new legislation, to which