

Supply—Transport

correspondence with officials of the Canadian Pacific over the past several years during which this process of attrition has been taking place, that not only does the company want to go out of the passenger business but it wants to go out of the transportation business completely in favour of the other ancillary activities that have developed around its numerous land holdings to which reference has been made from time to time.

I reiterate the same points that have been mentioned by other members. The service has become so restricted that it discourages the use of passenger facilities. For example, the "Dominion" was whittled down last fall to the point where it resembled a comic situation, like the Toonerville Trolley, with one diesel, one baggage car and two passenger cars. If you were going to make use of that transportation facility, you had to have the pioneering qualities of the early explorers of Canada.

Then, too, the Canadian Pacific has been closely the privately owned restaurants along the main line within recent years. They have been closing stations; they have been removing agents and they have been removing caretakers. As I say to the minister, if we do not get busy with the MacPherson report and its implications to this basic industry of transportation in Canada, we will not have anything left to discuss.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if I can ask the hon. gentleman, who has been talking about the closing of these station restaurants, if he can tell me what has happened to those historic ham sandwiches that used to be in there?

Mr. Dinsdale: So far as I know, from my experience, the only thing that has happened to the famous Canadian Pacific ham sandwich is that the price has gone up so rapidly it is now prohibitive. I suppose it is part of the general inflationary trend under the present administration.

There is a point that I am sure the minister has not presented to the officials of the Canadian Pacific in his discussions with them on these matters. I should like to refer to a speech made by the president of the Canadian Pacific, Mr. Emerson, to the Canadian Club in Montreal a year ago. It is a very good speech and I hope the minister has read it. He points out that notwithstanding the attrition of Canadian Pacific transportation facilities, the largest earnings of that

corporation come from their rail operation. I thought money was being lost on their transportation operation and this was the reason for the process of attrition.

Here is what Mr. Emerson himself said in his speech just a year ago:

Curiously it is often a source of surprise—

As it was a surprise to me.

—even amongst well informed people, to discover that the railway does not operate at a loss and, indeed, that it is the largest single source of net income to the company. In only one year in the history of Canadian Pacific was a loss on railway operations sustained.

Then, there is further information in that paragraph and he goes on, at the beginning of the next paragraph, to say:

Indeed, for the year just ended—

That was 1964.

—Canadian Pacific will report the highest level of railway revenues for any year in its history.

Notwithstanding that statement by the president, we are faced with this problem where at a time when the economy of western Canada is moving forward by leaps and bounds, when potash has become as important as wheat in sustaining our economy, when oil has produced a buoyant economic condition, we find we do not have the transportation facilities that were operating in the west even during the dark days of the depression. I feel perhaps that is an argument the minister could use with the officials of Canadian Pacific when he is carrying on the current negotiations. I hope that some sort of pause can be made in the process of eliminating one station after another. I know that during the past few years in my constituency periodically we have to get together with the local officials of the Chambers of Commerce and the local councils to meet with officials of the Canadian Pacific in an effort to try to stem the tide of this gradual deterioration in our transportation facilities.

● (9:10 p.m.)

I hope the minister will consider these suggestions, at this critical juncture and feel that there should be some pause. I know it is impossible for local councillors to meet the statistical onslaught of the officials of the railway who come with well prepared briefs, statisticians and economists, and present a series of selected statistics to demonstrate that the railway is operating at a loss. The only way we can arrive at a refutation of an argument of that kind is to recognize that they never include revenues from anything