

*Supply—Transport*

based on the realities of the moment rather than on the status quo ante. Second, Mr. Chairman, something must be done about the railways pulling out of different towns.

As an example I would draw attention to Rainy River in my riding, and Schreiber in the riding of the hon. member for Port Arthur. Something has to be done to compensate people who have invested money in houses, businesses and other ventures. These people have every right to legitimate compensation for the money they are losing because of the unilateral action of the railway companies when they pull out of these areas.

• (3:30 p.m.)

If you own a house now in one of these towns, you will find that property values have fallen. It is all very well for the Canadian National to offer, as they did in Nakina, to buy the homes of Canadian National employees. What about the homes of the people who are not connected with the Canadian National, people who are engaged in providing support services for the railways? There should be some protection for them, too.

There should be an undertaking by the railroads that if they buy this property they will not dump it on the market and thereby depress property values in the area to an even greater extent for the other people in the community. I feel there has to be some careful consideration given to these communities which were brought into existence to provide places for the employees to live. These communities were designed to serve the needs of the railroads and, in many instances, have no rationale for their existence other than the railroads.

Again dealing with the community situation, I believe that the railroads have an even further responsibility to the communities than I have so far outlined. Most of these communities along the lines of the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific were brought into existence to serve the needs of the employees of the railroads. In order to do this, these communities had to float debentures, go into debt to provide schools, sewage systems, roads and so on. When the railways pull out, Mr. Chairman, they take away a good part of the tax base and make it less possible for the communities to pay the interest and principal on this indebtedness which was incurred to provide services for the employees of the railroads. I feel that when the railroads pull out they should be obliged to pick up a certain amount of the capital cost that has been incurred in making these

[Mr. Reid.]

communities into places where the railway employees could live.

**An hon. Member:** I hope the minister is listening.

**Mr. Reid:** He can read it tomorrow. When the railways withdraw from these communities, we often find that there is no industry left in some cases, or if there is industry the railways do not help to preserve it. I completely absolve the Canadian National from this charge because they have gone out of their way to be generous. However the Canadian Pacific has deliberately attempted to block any industry coming into these areas. When I spoke before I referred to the example of a company which had spent \$100,000 in capital costs and then had gone to the Canadian Pacific to arrange for transportation facilities. The Canadian Pacific said they were not interested in that business. Well, the company has survived and is producing a product. The point is that when railways do move out of town, they ought to give those towns an opportunity to survive, perhaps on another economic base, and to attract industry if they can on the basis that good, cheap transcontinental transportation is available.

The Canadian Pacific seems to be going out of its way to discourage these industries. I think that they ought to be forced to provide support, for at least a limited amount of time, to these communities in order to give them a chance to survive. They may not be able to do so. They may wither up and die. At least, Mr. Chairman, an opportunity ought to be given. I am not one of these who are enamoured of city living. I should like to do everything I could do to achieve more decentralization than is being achieved in this country. There is too much centralization going on and we people on the outer fringes, if you like, are not getting a fair shake from the Canadian National or Canadian Pacific because they are cutting us off from the main centres of the country.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have just one other brief point to mention and it concerns the C.B.C. Specifically, it concerns satellite television transmission which comes into my riding. We are in a clear position because we get our television service from the C.B.C. in Winnipeg. Then, it is piped through a series of repeater stations and we get national television on a Winnipeg local basis. Nobody is complaining about this, but I have two comments to make.