

The Address—Mr. Whicher

the surrounding area will not have one passenger train leaving the station. The verdict of the commission handed down the other day was that it would not only allow the CPR to discontinue its service but also Canadian National Railways.

I close by saying something about the Canadian Pacific Railway. There is no member in this House who believes more in free enterprise than I. On the other hand, I believe that a corporation such as the CPR should have an obligation to the people of Canada. This corporation owns hotels all over Canada worth hundreds of millions of dollars. One thing that surely we can boast of is that this is the largest transportation company, not only in Canada but in the whole world, with shipping, railways and airline operations. That is something of which Canadians should be proud.

● (5:00 p.m.)

How did they make these hundreds of millions of dollars with which they built up their airline, shipping and hotel interest? I will tell you how they made it. They made it out of the railways. And how did they get the railways? They obtained them from the people of Canada. They were given 25 million acres, according to the original contract between the Canadian Pacific and the government of Canada, and \$25 million, which was a great deal of money in those days. They kept the money, they kept the millions of acres, and now they do not wish to supply us with passenger service. What is more, in my opinion they are trying to get out of providing that service even though in many instances it has been, and still is, a paying proposition.

The Canadian Pacific Railway, Mr. Speaker, has two or three aspirations. One of those is to make money. Another is to get out of the passenger business not just from Owen Sound to Toronto but all over Canada. The railways are attempting to stick us, the people, with this lack of service. They are doing this after having taken all the goodies given to them in years gone by. And what goodies they are! Think of the gas rights and the oil wells that they obtained from the 25 million acres that were spread right across Canada. Think of the prime locations they have in the various cities of Canada. Think of the location of the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, and of the locations of the CPR hotels in the cities hon. members come from, or in the cities close by.

It is high time we found out who is running these services, whether it is Parliament or the railways. So far as I am concerned, a deal was made. The deal was completed before the hearings took place. Not a single witness who appeared at the hearings wanted the railways to discontinue passenger service. Only the railways wanted to do that. I am sure the Canadian Transport Commission has heard all the arguments many times before. This situation is simply not right, when two parties have signed an agreement they both are under the obligation to carry it through. The government of Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, has kept its side of the bargain. The Canadian Pacific Railway, in my opinion, has not. The same could be said about Canadian

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National Railways. From that city which is north of Guelph there will not be a single passenger train running on or after November 1—not one.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, many residents of that area have no alternative means of transportation. When the hearings were held, the railways said that there are bus services if one goes to London. If you want to go to Toronto you must go to London and then to Toronto. It is a most unsatisfactory arrangement. The people living in places like Southampton, Kincardine, Walkerton, Port Elgin, Owen Sound, Mildmay and Hanover are all placed in this position.

If I may, I should like to refer to one paragraph of a letter written by the mayor of Southampton. He said that when the report was issued that this vital service was going to be discontinued on November 1, the citizens of Southampton could not believe that the report was correct. He said, "It was the most shocking and distressing news we have had in many years". He also said that evidently the voice of the people is completely ignored by our government, because they spoke strongly against this both in Owen Sound and in Guelph at the supposedly public hearings. In both these localities the only people who supported the discontinuance of the service were the railways. If this is our democracy, he wrote, these so-called public hearings are a farce and a complete waste of the taxpayers' money. To this, Mr. Speaker, I say amen. He continues with a most logical argument, pointing out that as far as Southampton is concerned there is no alternative service to the metropolitan area. I point out that within my riding is the huge development at Douglas Point, at which over \$1 billion will have been spent in the next three or four years. All the same, the Canadian Transport Commission had the nerve to allow the railways to discontinue passenger service.

I said at the beginning of my remarks that I sometimes wonder whether those in the government service read speeches made in this House. I sometimes think that what we say here is said in vain and that our remarks have no effect. I hope that someone in the government will look into the situation in the next week or so. I am referring particularly to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson), to whom I have spoken about this matter. This whole question is most difficult. We realize, of course, that passenger services have not always paid in the past. There are many other factors that must be corrected: the service is lousy and the trains are lousy. I do not mean that they are infested with lice; I mean that often they are dirty. There are no meals, and the only way you can obtain a drink of cold water is by stopping at a pump. Also, the hours of service are disgraceful.

It seems to me that if the citizens of Canada are to continue paying subsidies to the railways for passenger service, wherever it still exists, the citizens should have the right to say where and at what time a train will start. For example, trains from Owen Sound to Toronto leave at seven o'clock in the morning. That simply is not good enough. There are many ways in which passenger service should be improved. I appeal to the government and particularly to the Minister of Transport to look into