

difficult time making ends meet at a time when very little emphasis is placed on controlling inflation.

● (4:10 p.m.)

I welcome this opportunity that comes annually to speak about CN affairs. I should first like to make another plea to the Department of Transport to consider favourably the site I have proposed in Amherst township, in Dufferin county, for the new international airport to be built northwest of Toronto. This is a site that has a lot to offer. For example, not too many people will be displaced; the price of the land will be comparatively low; and it has good access to Toronto, Hamilton, London, Kitchener and Waterloo. This is a site that I feel should receive special consideration.

I was a little disturbed last week when I heard that one of the problems that might arise in this area is that there is no strongly flowing stream to carry away pollutants from the sewage and lagoon systems that might have to be constructed to cope with the expected approximately 100,000 people who would live there. I sincerely hope that by the time the proposed airport becomes operational this government, through the work of its National Research Council and as a result of the research undertaken by other government departments, will be in a position to introduce a recycling scheme that will make it possible for inland towns to promote and develop airports, as in this case, and industries.

To return to the main theme of my remarks, members from western Ontario have spent a lot of time in this debate discussing railroad matters. On November 1, all passenger rail traffic was discontinued in the very important and developing area north and west of Guelph and west of Stratford. At that time we felt that we might have lost the battle, but this does not always indicate that we have lost the war. This debate provides us with an opportunity of further discussing the developments that might take place in this particular area. We fought Canadian National Railways in this regard for many years. I have always felt that the Board of Transport Commissioners gave us a fair deal. I think sometimes we received better consideration from them than we have from the National Transportation Commission.

Looking back to the railway bill brought into the House by the minister of transport of the day, who had squirmed himself into this House from his many positions in the civil service, I can recall that this was not the first legislation he introduced which was controversial and which he had difficulty putting through the House. I am very glad to say that our party did not support that bill on the final vote. The National Transportation Act was to be the be-all and end-all of our transportation problems. It was going to unfold a great new transportation policy, one which I am still waiting to see. In fact, I think this legislation opened the door to the railways to close branch lines which, in a lot of areas, should still be continued.

As I have mentioned before, the inconsistencies in the decisions of the commission are outstanding. The other

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day the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Anderson) mentioned the fact that the railway line in his area had not been discontinued. We noticed that, according to news articles, the CPR had discontinued it because people had to ride in baggage cars, stations were filthy and the scheduling was bad. However, the transportation commission ordered the CPR to continue operation of that line.

Let me refer once again to the hearings that took place during the Easter holidays last April in Owen Sound. One of the things pointed out to the Canadian Transportation Commission on that occasion was the fact that the CPR should upgrade its services and improve accommodation on the trains. Talking of riding in baggage cars, I have ridden in the baggage car of the rail liner that runs out of Guelph simply because there was not room for me in the rest of the car. This has happened weekend after weekend. Certainly, people who had to ride in the baggage car would look for alternative transportation the next time. A public relations job on the part of the railway was needed here. The last speaker said that rail liners are going to be run from Ottawa to Montreal. I suggest that if they are no more comfortable than the rail liners in my area, it is not going to be long before people will refuse to ride on them, too. Consequently, more pressure will be put on the highways of the nation to accommodate those who would like to travel on the railroad but find the accommodation so uncomfortable that they look for an alternative.

I am also getting tired of hearing this phrase "uneconomic branch lines". It is not only the railways that are uneconomic. For example, what about the CBC, many government departments, and especially the Department of National Defence with its aeroplanes that go straight into mothballs? How far do we continue this process of lopping off services that do not pay? The railroads have not devoted enough research into providing alternate means of travelling on the railroads. This is a matter I mentioned before and which I will keep on mentioning until I am told that it is economically and mechanically impossible.

There are miles of railroad lines across this country which are being maintained and, in fact improved. For example, in my area a new nuclear power project is being constructed at Douglas Point. Part of the money provided by this bill is for the construction of a new branch line from Hanover to Southampton and then up to Douglas Point. Once a day or once a week a train will carry oil to power the heavy water plant until enough steam is provided by the plant to enable it to be self-sufficient. That line is going to pay because the railroad would not put it in if it were not. The weight of the rails is being increased all the way up that line, and it will be ploughed all winter long. Why will this line be kept in service? Will it be only a 5 per cent or 10 per cent usage? If I were in the provincial government and the railway company applied for more PCV licences to operate their express trucks up there, I would ask them if they had ever tried putting those trucks on the rails which were not being used. I would ask them whether they had thought of putting on buses for the people to use. They