

hon. members present will be interested in it because it concerns a problem that is prevalent across Canada. Some time ago the Canadian Transport Commission held hearings dealing with Canadian National Railways and Canadian Pacific Railway, in the cities of Owen Sound and Guelph. They brought down a verdict that from November 1, 1970, there would be no more passenger trains, either Canadian Pacific or Canadian National, running north of the city of Guelph in the province of Ontario, that is, in southern Ontario. I have not the slightest idea whether the government reads these speeches. I have not the slightest idea whether the speech I have made this afternoon is an exercise in frustration. But I do hope that some member of the government will look into the situation that I am about to recite, because it is most important that he does.

● (4:50 p.m.)

We have to go back many years, Mr. Speaker. Many speeches concerning this subject have been delivered in the House of Commons and undoubtedly some of what I say will be repetition. Canadian National Railways is owned by the people of Canada. The Canadian Pacific Railway, free enterprise corporation that it be, has been subsidized, not only since it commenced to run train services across Canada but indeed before it started to do so. For example, the Canadian Pacific Railway was given \$25 million by the taxpayers of Canada. What is more, it received a grant of 25 million acres of land in Canada, absolutely free. This land was a present to the company. In return, the company had an obligation to perform. The obligation was to provide services, both freight and passenger, wherever rail lines had been built in Canada.

I do not think there are many of us in the House who would want either Canadian National or Canadian Pacific to run a train service to a part of Canada where nobody lives. It is true that there are in Canada lines where economy demands passenger service be either stopped completely or curtailed. In my opinion, the railways of Canada have not been forced out of the passenger business. What happened was that the board of directors sat down at the table one day and came to the division that ten years from now the company would be out of the passenger business in Canada completely. They decided they did not want to bother with it because there was too much other business to be had—carrying freight and other ventures of the company such as oil wells, gas wells, copper mines, hotels, airlines, shipping lines and so on.

At the hearings held in Owen Sound the railway representatives said the reason for wanting to get out of the passenger business was that it was not paying. Most of us are not willing to accept the figures put forward by the railways in support of this claim. At least, I am not willing to accept them because they do not prove this contention at all. Somehow or other there is a kind of closed corporation between the Canadian Transport Commission and the railways. The railways claim that it costs \$15.87, or whatever it is, to carry a passenger from Owen Sound or from Southampton to Toronto. How do we know that these figures are correct? I am highly suspi-

The Address—Mr. Whicher

cious that they are exaggerating them in an effort to get out of the passenger business completely. I think they should be told to put all their figures on the table so that I and other interested citizens of Canada have the opportunity to examine them. Be that as it may, their contention is that they must get out of the passenger business because it does not pay.

On the day I attended these hearings I asked the representatives of Canadian Pacific Railway whether they wanted to get out of all business activities that did not pay, and they said yes. I clipped an article out of the financial section of the *Globe and Mail* about a month ago, which announced that CP Air had lost \$600,000 or \$700,000 during the last two or three months and that as a result of this loss an extensive advertising campaign was being taken up immediately. There was published that day a half page ad in the *Globe and Mail*—hon. members may well remember it because it appeared in all the larger newspapers in Canada—advertising a flight known as “The Executive”.

I do not know, Mr. Speaker, whether you have ever flown on this Executive flight, but let me tell you it is some plane. In the advertisement it was stated that you can have any kind of magazine on the plane. If you are travelling from Toronto or Montreal to Vancouver and you want to occupy yourself with business matters, they can even supply you with dictating machines. You can have any kind of beer you want. They serve the best meals. There are toys for the children. They even boast about the pretty stewardesses, and this may be one of their true claims. It is very hard for a country fellow like me to appreciate all this boasting about the great service given by CP Air, which is owned completely by CPR, when you cannot even buy a cold hamburger on their train from Toronto to Owen Sound, a city of 19,000 people. As I say, as of November 1 Owen Sound will not have one train leaving the station.

Years ago when I was a member of the legislature in Toronto I used to travel by train from Owen Sound to Toronto quite often, and when I did it was absolutely full. The train went down in the morning and came back at night. The CPR decided some years later to get out of the passenger business. They did so because they were making so much money in other endeavours that they could not bother to count the money collected from their passengers.

In spite of the fact that 15 years ago this train was full, the CPR then decided to run the train every second day only. Since the train was still full, this made it difficult for them to get out of the passenger business as fast as they could so the company decided to double the fare. While the CNR would charge you “X” dollars to take you to Toronto from Owen Sound, the CPR charged “XX” dollars. That is one way to get out of business, and it is an indication that the CPR certainly wanted to lose its passenger business in Canada. I defy any of their senior officials to tell me otherwise.

Once again let me impress upon you, Mr. Speaker, that as of November 1 the people in the city of Owen Sound, some 19,000 of them, and many thousands more living in