

winter season as well. It has a permanent population I would say of about one thousand, and in the summer season this is very materially increased, but to what extent I can hardly estimate—probably by fifty per cent. The residents of this district are people who are largely engaged in business or employed in one manner or another in the city of Halifax. These people established their residences there upon the assumption that it was the policy of the Intercolonial railway to encourage the growth and development of this suburban district and that it would be continuously provided with suitable train accommodation. Homes have been built there, mercantile businesses have been established, and schools organized upon the assumption that such railway accommodation would obtain. The stability of suburban residences and of mercantile business which are now in existence there, and the prosperity of the district generally is dependent entirely upon the permanence and suitability of the railway service afforded, those who there reside. This is evident, I imagine, to every person who has had any experience in or knowledge of suburban districts. I know that in this particular district at least one industry has been established which employs a considerable amount of labour and I think that its establishment is attributable solely to the fact that it was possible for the labour employed to have ready access to the city of Halifax at hours which were convenient to them. If suitable railway accommodation is not available in suburban districts to the nearest city it is almost impracticable to obtain labour for any industries which might desire to locate there. In connection with suburban districts I think it is generally conceded, and I may predicate it as a fact, that a late night train service is an absolute necessity to its very life and continuance. Suburban dwellers always hope to avail themselves of the amusements and social advantages of city life, and this is only possible with the establishment and maintenance of a late suburban train service. This may sound to some as an extravagant demand on the part of suburban dwellers, but nevertheless it is one of the necessities and advantages demanded, and is one of the inevitable incidents to suburban life.

The district of Bedford has had the advantage of a late night suburban train service to and from Halifax for a long number of years, I believe twenty years; and recently, some two or three weeks ago, this service was summarily discontinued.

The ground alleged for the discontinuance of this railway service, I believe, is that the cost of the service was very much in excess of the revenue derived from it, and consequently the cancellation of this train service is defended upon the ground of economy. I have not had the advantage of seeing any financial statement showing the cost of this service together with its earnings, although the Minister of Railways has promised to furnish me with the same. I wish to submit to the Government that, in my judgment, to determine whether this late train service shall or shall not continue as formerly, upon the net financial result of the operation of this one train is altogether too narrow a view, and the policy should be settled upon broader lines. There are many other things to be considered in determining whether or not this particular train service is financially justifiable. In the first place, it must be very difficult to actually determine whether this service is profitable or not. A great many other trains serve this district incidentally, and many of its residents, and travellers going there, take advantage of these trains; and to this extent returns properly attributable in origin to this suburban district generally can hardly be ascertained with accuracy, and consequently it does not, I fear, receive credit for the same in the calculations of the Railway Department. Again, it is of course obvious that the many residents of this district have many friends, who are obliged to visit there very frequently, and who perhaps do not always avail themselves of what is strictly a suburban railway service, but use other trains, and, again, any income derived from such travel can hardly be accounted for with any precision. The district is further served by another railway, namely, the Dominion Atlantic railway, which uses the Intercolonial rails from Bedford to Halifax. I have no doubt that this railway receives considerable revenue from what is strictly suburban traffic, and that road must account to the Intercolonial for a proportion of the same. It would be very difficult for me to estimate what particular amount is received by the Intercolonial from this same source. Its origin, however, is due to the existence of the suburban district, which was made possible by proper passenger railway accommodation. There is also the question of freight. In this suburban district a freight traffic has grown up. Mercantile establishments have been established to meet the require-