

ers. There is nothing wrong with being a stockholder. The CPR is a great organization and in many instances has done a good job.

However, both the Canadian National and the Canadian Pacific have failed the people of Canada by not providing proper railway systems. They have obligations. They made a deal, not with the government of the day but through the government with the people of Canada, the people in my riding of Bruce and in the provinces all across Canada. The Canadian Pacific said "We will give you perpetual service for X number of dollars and X millions of acres of land". In its wisdom, the federal government gave the Canadian Pacific Railway \$25 million and 25 million acres of land. That is a lot of land and today the Canadian Pacific has oil wells, gas wells, big hotels and everything imaginable, the returns from which go to swell the coffers of the company. The railway company signed agreements with little municipalities across the country. These little municipalities, such as the one I represent, gave \$10,000 or \$12,000 in return for a guarantee perpetual service. But that service is not being given, Mr. Speaker.

If the mortgage on my house were held by a private individual and that individual were to die during the term of the mortgage, would that mean that I would not have to pay his heirs? Of course not; I would have to pay. The Canadian Pacific guaranteed perpetual service for so much money. But if I did not keep up the mortgage payments on my house, the house would be taken back. That is the way in the free enterprise system. The Canadian Pacific Railway is one of the largest free enterprises in the whole world. They guaranteed a service which we did not get, so let them give back the money and give back the land. Let the municipalities go to the Canadian National Railways and get their money back, plus the interest. You may think this is a foolish idea which could not be implemented, but the only thing these money barons understand is a dollar bill. If we demand the return of the money because their signature is on the deal, then I think they might attempt to give the service that is required.

We do not need rail lines in every part of Canada, of course, but there is no reason for not having service into the city of Toronto with two million people or Montreal with around three million people. I am sure that my hon. friends from Newfoundland are not asking that the railway serve every village and town. What we all request is a reasonable service. When the railway service was eliminated in the area I represent, the railway companies and the bus companies were in cahoots. The bus companies guaranteed to the public and the Canadian Transport Commission that they would look after transportation for the area. As far as the bus companies are concerned nothing has been done and the railway companies have stopped giving service.

I will go as far as to say that the deal the railways have given to the people of Canada is just legalized robbery any way you look at it. If I were head of either the Canadian Pacific Railway or the Canadian National Railways, I would not be able to face the people of Canada after what they have done in this great country of ours.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): When speaking on Monday on this bill the hon. member for Moncton (Mr.

CNR and Air Canada

Thomas) said that this is the annual exercise in futility. I do not know if I would go that far, but certainly it is the annual bite placed on the people of Canada for funds for Air Canada and the Canadian National Railways. Every year we go through this process and deal with this kind of measure, the only difference in the script is the amount of money involved. Every year we see the spectacle of the Parliament of Canada bailing out the CNR with respect to debt charges that the railway should not be expected to carry. Ever since its formation in 1923, the deck has been stacked against the CNR. The government of Canada bailed out entities that operated as financial and economic pirates between 1900 and 1920. When the small railways that now make up the CNR went broke, we bailed them out by buying them up; and we are still paying.

• (1600)

Some of the money provided by this bill is for the payment of a deficit resulting from the interest incurred on the original debt, a debt that has been charged to the CNR, quite improperly in my view. I submit that the original mortgage indebtedness of 1923 ought to have been refinanced, for I submit that the original mortgage debt has been paid off. The Canadian National Railways system has been in debt long enough. It has been kept in debt all this time under the present set-up. I submit that the system ought to be permitted to show a profit, so that it need not come to parliament for help. Parliament should not have to bail out that system as a result of deficits incurred by reason of interest paid on debt.

May I mention the speech made the other day by my friend, the hon. member for Moncton. He was the lead-off speaker of the official opposition. If he has always believed what he said, I am proud of him. If he is newly converted to the ideas of the NDP, I am even prouder of him, for in the course of his remarks he enunciated a philosophy with which we have concurred for many years. What he said we have advocated in this chamber ever since my party first sent members to this place way back in 1935. I should like to quote one paragraph from the speech of the hon. member for Moncton. He said, in part, as recorded at page 546 of *Hansard*:

Surely, the government owes the people of this country the duty not only to listen to their complaints but to take some action on them.

This is where the government has failed the people of Canada shamefully. This is where a good share of the responsibility lies for failing to develop a national and rational transportation policy that is based not on profit alone but rather on the concept that transportation is essential to Canada, that where necessary services must be subsidized, whether they be in the form of highway, rail, air or water transport. The profit motive is important, but it should be secondary to the concept of providing essential public services.

The last sentence in the paragraph reads, "The profit motive is important, but it should be secondary to the concept of providing essential public services." I agree. I submit that so long as we maintain a rail transport system that is partly publicly and partly privately owned, a system whose primary concern is the making of profits and whose secondary concern is the provision of service, we will continue experiencing the kind of grief with regard to rail operations that hon. members of this House have been complaining about for 30 or 40 years.