

Terrace Bay
Schreiber

News

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Letter to P.M.:

Nakina Runthrough

Dear Mr. Prime Minister

It is with a great deal of concern and urgency that I write to you concerning the "Nakina Runthrough", a matter which has been brought to your attention and that of your Ministers on numerous occasions in the past.

Canadian National Railway has made application to run trains from Hornpayne to Armstrong thus eliminating Nakina as a crew change point which is permitted by the collective agreement between the United Transportation Union, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the Company, provided it is done within a negotiated settlement.

The Railway Transport Committee has a mandate and the responsibility in law to determine whether or not the negotiated settlement is in keeping with Section 120 of the Railway Act.

This application by CN is predicated on the contention that they will save up to \$1.2 million annually by eliminating Nakina as a home terminal for running trade personnel even though they have repeatedly refused, even before a standing committee of the House of Commons, to provide a breakdown of the alleged savings.

Nakina is there because CN established it as a terminal over 60 years ago and CN and CN alone encouraged conductors, engineers, locomotive foremen to take up residence along with other necessary personnel to service and maintain locomotives, rolling stock, trackage and other yard and station facilities.

In return, as is the case with all railways, they were afforded extremely preferential tax treatment by all levels of government because this mode of transportation was seen as providing an essential service (the only transportation service in those days) and as a tool for economic

development of Canada's hinterland.

Now, with new technology, longer trains, less need for maintenance with diesel locomotion and improved rolling stock, Nakina, a creation of CN is now expendable on and to the alter of technological change and expediency.

If in Canadian Law CN has the right to effect these changes which destroys a way of life which they created, surely there is a joint corporate and government responsibility to ensure that a community is not left high and dry with those remaining given the onerous task of picking up the pieces.

The Township of Nakina has provided a modern water and sewer system to its residents, with government blessing and encouragement. The cost of which has been amortized over the next 35 years. Nakina provides excellent education facilities to grade 8 and a recreation complex which is the envy of any community in Canada of comparable size and population.

Residential taxpayers, Kimberly Clark (which has invested several million dollars to accommodate its woodlands work force), and The Hudson Bay Company (which has a sizeable investment in a new department store) are wondering whether their operation in Nakina will be viable, given the pullout and abandonment by CN.

Surely, the time has long since past when a major corporation like CN, a Crown Corporation, can unilaterally decide that what is best for CN is in the best interests of Canada as a whole. They have abandoned their responsibility for passenger traffic to VIA Rail by downgrading the service, they have forsaken local freight and express customers to highway carriers and completely forgotten their mandate to service Canadians living in remote communities without alternate ground

transportation.

I can quote at great length the concern that you personally and your colleagues expressed concerning the "Nakina Issue" when you were in opposition to a Liberal government. You were eloquent in describing the social and economic upheaval to people who believed that your concerns were sincere and genuine.

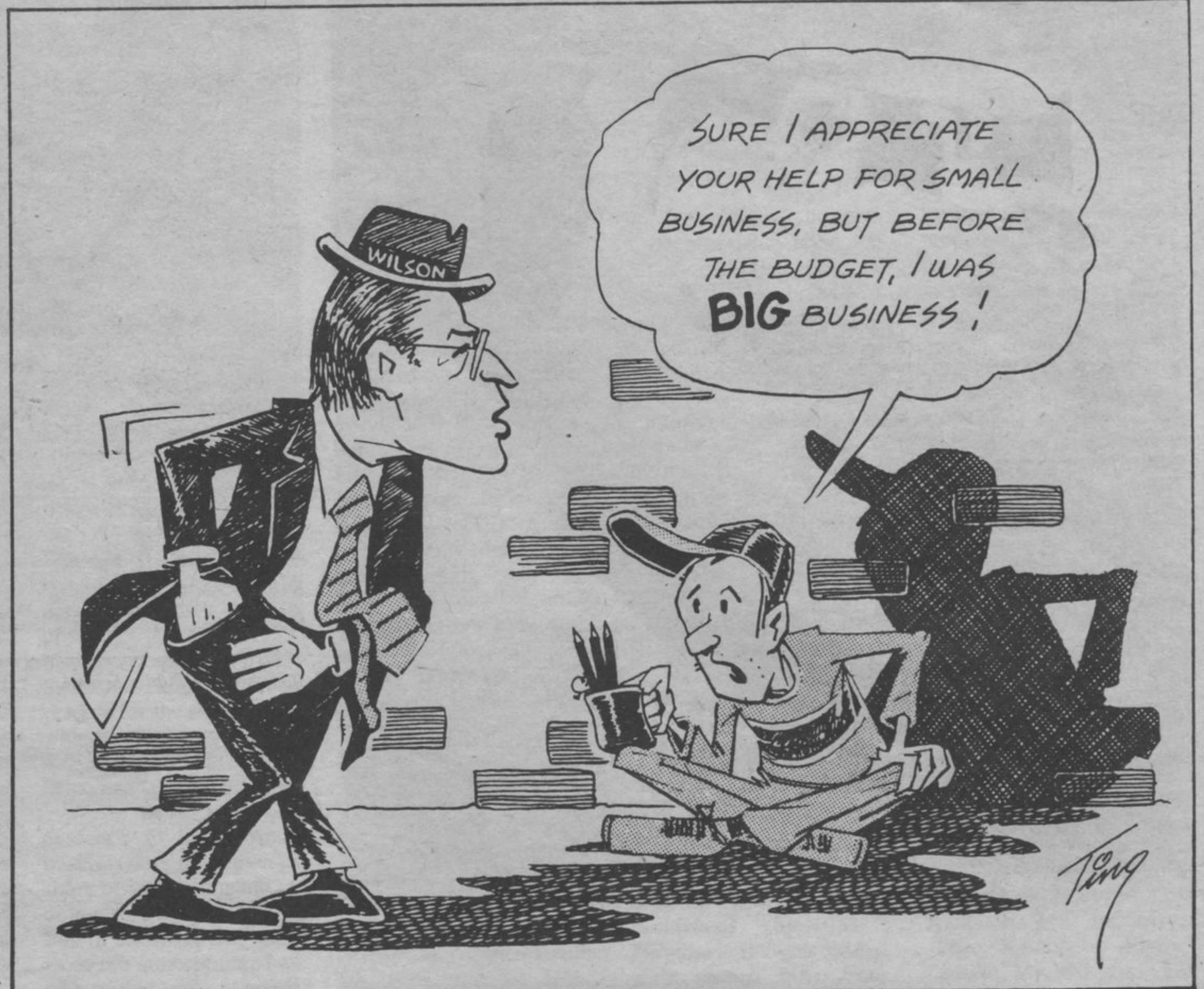
Notwithstanding CN's preoccupation with unproven economy and questionable efficiency (given their mandate of service to Canada) surely there remains a moral, ethical if not legal obligation to have a public forum where all concerned private and corporate citizens can express their legitimate views on this issue which has far reaching consequences.

A hearing within the mandate of the Railway Transport Committee will deal only with the issue of whether or not CN employees were treated fairly.

It is incumbent upon your government and The Minister of Transport, Mr. Mazankowski, along with Regional Industrial Expansion Minister Sinclair Stevens, to provide an open forum in Nakina to begin the process of addressing the human, social and economic consequences of corporate decisions that will affect the lives of so many Canadians.

I respectfully urge you to intervene on behalf of Nakina residents, and indeed all Canadians living in resource-based communities, to begin the process of assessing the impact of corporate decision making.

It was the problem in Labrador, Uranium City, Atikokan and Ear Falls. Let us not abandon the people who create the new wealth that fuels the economy for the benefit of all Canadians. Those who live in small communities that provide the resources to feed our urban industrial complex and those who



Did You Know

Pays Plat (a French name meaning land that is flat) an Indian reservation west of Schreiber having a population of approximately 100 residents was a North West Company outpost in 1775.

Are your loved ones safe today?

live in communities like Nakina that keep our transportation and communication system operating effectively, in the public interest, are not to be tossed away once the task is complete.

In opposition you and your colleagues said all the right things. Now as Prime Minister you have the opportunity and the responsibility to do what is right.

Your advice and assistance will be greatly appreciated by all Canadians who have empathy with Nakina and who care about Canada's future.

Yours sincerely

Gilles Pouliot, MPP
Lake Nipigon Riding

Are your loved ones safe today? Currently our Canadian court system is backlogged, a problem that has been compounded by the implementation of the Young Offenders Act.

Under the Y.O.A., even the most violent criminals could spend less than three years in a detention centre only to be unleashed upon society once again. Similar to most legislation, there are many grey areas left to the judge to interpret.

Acts of violence have no age limits! A crime is still a crime. Close the loop holes and bring safety and justice back into our socie-

ty. A petition has been started by concerned citizens to have this legislation changed. If you care and are willing to help,

contact:
Barbara Campbell, or
Sheila Sansome, P.O. Box 47, Lombardy, Ontario K0G 1L0.

Letter to the Editor

Peter Monks

I would like to express my appreciation to the Schreiber Centennial Committee for their outstanding efforts, in particular the Italian Supper planned, catered attendance for 400 people when the "actual demands exceeded 800."

The committee responded magnificently by obtaining an extra 400 place settings (china dishes indeed). K-C flew in extra cooking containers, all volunteer help in cooking - how could this be bettered in community spirit? Well done and thank you!

Arthur Black

Culture shock

There's an old country music album by singer/songwriter/King of the Roadster Roger Miller that's called "Gorry I Haven't Written Lately." The title was a play on words and on the fact that Ole Rog' hadn't had a hit song for a few years. Going through a creative dry spell, as it were.

Well, I'm not sure what Roger's excuse was, but I've been having a little trouble outstaring the typewriter lately myself. But I know whay my problem is. Culture Shock. I moved from the North to southern Ontario a few weeks ago, and my system hasn't adjusted yet.

Nothing radical, you understand. I didn't move into a gay commune in

like that. As a matter of fact, I'm much farther out in the sticks than I ever was in Thunder Bay. I'm riding hard on two rolling acres of crabgrass overlooking the Grand River, halfway between the sleepy towns of Fergus and Elora. From my window I can see two grain silos, the red roof of a barn all but buried in maple trees, one obese groundhog and a busybody red squirrel. The latter two appear to come with the property. As a matter of fact they seem to be wondering just who the hell I think I am, moving in as if I owned the joint.

Well, who am I to argue? Besides, the groundhog appears to be keeping a goodly patch of my front lawn manicured and the squirrel is more

hungry dobermans when it comes to announcing intruders. Groundhogs and squirrel have been arbitrarily dubbed Walter and Earl, respectively.

It's a fascinating area. Just down the road a few miles are communities like St. Jacobs and Elmira, in which Mennonite families still dress in 19th century style clothes and get around by horse and wagon. On the other hand, each weekend Fergus and Elora are inundated with motely hordes of bizarrely-clad tourists from Toronto, Hamilton and Noo Yawk eagerly snuffling about for brass beds, pine rocking chairs and the like. Lotta money in antiques. Which is why there are more than a couple of

beds and pine furniture almost around the clock. "Authentic reproductions" they call them.

Gold mines, I call them. Which is one of the things they don't seem to have down here. Lots of corn, lots of dairy cattle, but not too much in the way of mines.

Funny how you take mines for granted in the North. Red Lake, Sudbury, Geraldton, Silver Islet, Marathon... I don't think I was ever very far from some kind of mine -- gold, silver, nickel or amethyst -- when I lived in the north. Tell someone down here that you used to poke around in abandoned mines up north and they look at you like you're Captain Kidd.



Well, aside from my friends, the air. It could be my imagination I suppose, but the air doesn't taste or smell or feel quite right down here. Southern Ontario air feels heavier, moist and humid. Sort of like the difference between Dom Perignon and draft beer.

What don't I miss about the North? That's easy.

Black flies. Haven't seen one of the beggars since I got south of Blind River. Which is just as well, not just for me, but for the four-footed residents around here as well. I mean... Earl is a helluva Watchsquirrel. He's ferocious and knows no fear.

But a pack of Northern Ontario black flies would inhale him for