

ON TRACK STRATEGIES

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A Statement on Behalf of Milton Residents Affected by Intermodal Lines

by

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to the

**Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
Review Panel Public Hearing
CN Milton Logistics Hub Project**

**Holiday Inn Express & Suites
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MS. RITA VOGEL POST: And now I would like to introduce Milton RAIL's friend, Greg Gormick, from On Track Strategies to address the Panel.

MR. GORMICK: Thank you, I'm sorry I'm a little tardy, sort of like a CN freight train. Four points: revisionism, safety, failed transportation policy and thorough alternatives analysis.

This is the wrong yard and the wrong place at the wrong time. It suits CN's needs because it's flat, it's relatively narrow and it's on the mainline. That doesn't mean it's the right location strategically or geographically. The yard they have now wasn't the right yard in the right place either.

Timing? They say they need this yard because they are so overwhelmed with traffic. That's fine. But their president the other day said he is struggling to get enough traffic on to the eastern end of the system to keep it going. I'm hearing two different stories here.

The sign out front reads Milton Logistics Hub. Oh, please. That is spin, spin, spin. In fact, that's the start of my next editorial about Bombardier for the Toronto Sun. Spin, spin, spin. And I know about spin, because I worked for these people in PR. I also worked for Canadian Pacific in PR and corporate affairs.

It's rhetoric. It's spinning. It's going back on history. None of these CN people were involved in those earlier projects. I was. I was CN's Assistant Manager of Modal Competitive Research from 1989 to 1991. In 1986, a CN vice-president I loved turned me into a consultant. He took me from a railway background, from journalism, from advocacy and he said, "If you'll come and work for me on intermodal, I've got a contract for you." That started my career in 1986.

CN's Brampton Intermodal Terminal? I was there before it was opened because my uncle was the Coordinator of Service Design for CN's Great Lakes Region and he said at the time, "This yard is not going to last. It's the wrong shape and it's in the wrong place."

This is what we are going to do again? That Brampton yard is a redevelopment opportunity. That's also what's not being discussed here. That property has incredible redevelopment potential.

The Laser: I remember riding that prime CN intermodal train many times between Montreal and Toronto, and going into Brampton. Well, I saw a perfect yard in Montreal, which was long, flat, lean and double-ended, at Turcotte.

Here, we would go in here and we would have congestion going into the Brampton yard before we even got there. It was so bad. And it's still bad. They need to get out of that yard; there is no question about that. I'm not at loggerheads with them over that. The yard is bad.

But Milton is not the right place for Brampton's replacement. From 1998 to 2001, I was on a contract with CN. I actually was the speech writer for the man who set the whole tone for this, who was the late and legendary E. Hunter Harrison. His spirit is still hovering around here.

Hunter had a take no prisoners approach: "They don't like it out in Milton? Too bad. What can we do to schmooze them? I know! Let's paint the bridges blue. That will make them like us."

I watched all of this. I participated in it. The files are sitting back at my office. This is wrong.

I also worked on other Intermodal projects, because I also worked for Canadian Pacific. I was thrilled to see a Canadian Pacific car sitting out there in the parking lot this evening because, between the two railways, I'll take them. When we had to do the CP Vaughan Intermodal Terminal project, we went through the process twice. I went through it once from the journalistic side dealing with CP through a gentleman – another railway vice-president – who I loved very much and who left us a year or so ago. And he said, "We have got to satisfy these people up in Vaughan because they have good points."

And CP went back for a second look at their original proposal and, by the time they came back a second time, I was with them professionally. Vaughan was one of my PR projects. And we did what those people wanted.

Now, did everybody want it up in Vaughan? No. It's controversial. We were coming in with an industrial repurposing of agricultural land. You are never going to be loved. And let's cut right to the chase. It's not a logistics hub. It's not an intermodal hub. It's a railway and truck yard.

Freight trains, passenger trains and commuter trains. I've dealt with them all. People love passenger trains. They sort of like commuter trains. They hate freight trains. They are big, dirty and noisy, they tie up the grade crossings, and they can be unsafe if the owner is not running them properly.

Revisionism? We're not getting the full sorry here about what's going on. "We're just going to build a little yard, but we need a big buffer."

No, no, no! CN was so jealous of CP because they did Vaughan correctly. They bought all the land and then they got a trucking company, Fastfrate, and they got Sears, and they came in and developed all that land. And if you go up to Vaughan and you see it, it's the ideal situation. They planned it so that those trucks don't have to come out of the Vaughn Intermodal Terminal to go to Fastfrate or to Sears SLH. They have their own roads. They put it right at a spot where there is immediate access to the main highways.

And CP monitored that. They told the truckers, "Hey, don't start going through Bolton. That will get us into trouble. You go down 50 and on to the 427. That's your route. Stick to it."

The trucking issue is a big one here and that brings us to safety. I'm sorry to have to say this because I never thought I would have to. My family stretches back a ways with this company. In fact, back to when it was the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk. My great-grandfather and his brother went to work for the Grand Trunk in 1882. A great-great-uncle went to work for Canadian Pacific at the same time. I'm beginning to wonder who were the smarter railroaders?

Risk. There is risk in transportation. There is risk in everything. They'll tell you that this is really safe. It's not safe. They reconditioned their Paul Tellier Tunnel the other day with sulphuric acid down in Sarnia. It happens.

Safety costs and safety pays. You're opening up all kinds of safety issues here at a time when the industry is in turmoil and CN is in even more turmoil. They have changed executives and presidents more often than most people change their underwear these days. This is not a stable company.

CN needs to be asked some serious questions that relate to – and unfortunate I won't be allowed enough time to get into this here – thorough alternatives analysis. That is a key aspect of the American process. I was just dealing with it the other day on a project in Oregon. It needs to be done.

A lot of questions remain to be answered. It's unfortunate that my friends from Milton RAIL and Milton Says No have to do all this work. They have to because CN hasn't done their work. They need to be made to do that. I hope you can hold them to account.

CN was once called The People's Railway back when we owned them. Well, they should take a cue from another man who owns a railway – completely. He's also one of CN's largest shareholders. That's Warren Buffet.

When asked, Buffet says, "I bought the Burlington Northern Santa Fe outright because it's a great investment. But it's also my compact with America. I get to make money, and our investors make money, but it's a compact with Americans. We have to run safely and efficiently, and in a way that does not disturb these communities."

Thank you.

APPLAUSE

THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm going to ask you all please to refrain from clapping. This happened at another general session and you were very good about that. There is a good reason for this, because we don't want anybody who is coming forward to speak to the Panel to feel in any way intimidated, to feel that maybe the room is full of supporters for another view. So from now on, I would ask if you would refrain from applause.

So, thank you, Ms. Vogel Post and ... I'm sorry, I didn't hear your name properly.

MR. GORMICK: Greg Gormick. You've seen my work and my name previously because the other group gave it to you the other day.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Greg Gormick, yes. Thank you for your presentation.

<https://ceaa-acee.gc.ca/050/documents/p80100/130882E.pdf>