

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, January 15, 1990.

The House met at 8 p.m.

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Neil Gaudry): The Honourable Member has four minutes remaining. The Honourable Member for Wolseley.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Acting Speaker, in the few minutes before the supper hour I made mention of the fact that the former federal Minister of Transport, the Honourable John Crosbie, in 1987 suggested a \$360 million rebuilding fund for old equipment. I think he made the right announcement, but as usual there was no carry through on the part of the federal Tories, and that is unfortunate.

We can also compare the degree of subsidization between this mode of transportation and the road mode, highway trucking and private vehicles, passenger vehicles and buses. We can compare it with aviation. The aviation budget for the federal Government in today's dollars would be close to two-thirds of a billion dollars per annum. That is not an inconsequential number.

Ditto the situation for Maritime shipping. What is the degree of federal involvement on the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence, the East Coast, the West Coast, and, to a lesser degree, the Arctic coast? Again, very, very significant. Whether one is talking about ice surveillance patrol aircraft, whether one is talking about small harbours construction, large harbour construction, general port facilities, navigation, harbour marine traffic control, dredging, joint developments of facilities in the harbour areas, and, in fact, even Government involvement in the port administrations in a number of different fashions and different models, again we see very, very significant Government involvement at the federal level, whether it be aviation, whether it be marine or whether it be road. We do not see it for rail. We do not see it at all.

* (2005)

I think that this country deserves decent passenger rail transport. A lobby group called Transport 2000 that has been around for a number of years has come out with some very interesting statistics in a number of position papers that they have put forward. That is the sort of thing the people on the other side of the House and in the federal Tories should be looking at. I think this is going to cut into tourism, and I think it is going to cut into tourism in a big way. It is not just the essential transportation to the municipalities to the east of us around the Manitoba-Ontario border or up on the bayline, as we have talked about before, but it is also tourism. That is going to cut into the dollars available for spending here in this province and in every other province that has been impacted.

In closing, Mr. Acting Speaker, I think what we have here is a very, very sad day for this country and for this province. Woe betide that Government when it goes to the polls, because the people of Canada are going to remember, and they are going to remember well. They are not going to be voting for that Party again. Thank you.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Acting Speaker, it is with a feeling of sadness that I speak on this issue this evening. While one has referred to this as being the national dream in terms of the availability of coast-to-coast transportation by the railway, we are seeing today the demise of 17 of 38 routes. The Canadian now is virtually a thing that is of the past. One thinks of the opportunities that were there for travel across this great country. We have looked at the history that was involved and the fact that the building of the railway was one of the most significant parts in terms of the Confederation. We have seen now the little issue which to us this far away may seem like a small issue, but we have seen the impact that a group on Vancouver Island has had by bringing this forward as an issue that may in fact be in contravention of the intent of Confederation, the fact now that at least for a short period of time if not for a long period there will be transportation on the island, I believe, between Victoria and Nanaimo.

There have been others that have made attempts to have injunctions brought forward that would force VIA Rail to be continued in other areas. So the Government has referred to this as being something where we are wasting time. I think, Mr. Acting Speaker, that it is far from wasting time. Here we are looking at a historic event, an opportunity that was there to have maintained a viable rail service in this country, one that would be on a par with that in other countries of the world, and we are going in the opposite direction. I think it is time all of us were prepared to admit that there have been mistakes made. There has been comment made from the other House about some of this having actually been initiated by a Liberal regime.

I do not think there is any point in saying no, that was not so. I think we all have to admit that the Liberals were involved and made some bad decisions, and there is no shame in admitting that there was a mistake made on occasion.

Here we are in a situation where another mistake is being made. We are told it is a waste of time because it is a fait accompli and there is nothing that can be done about it.

* (2010)

I just want to touch, Mr. Acting Speaker, on a couple of issues that came up this afternoon. One of these was the comment about burning the Speaker. I take a great deal of concern about the inference that is there. I think it is time the Government realized—and

they seem to have difficulty getting this through their heads—that this is a minority situation. Many, many times when they were in Opposition, they challenged the ruling of the Speaker, but they knew full well it did not make any difference at that time because they did not have the strength to so call burn the Speaker. Every time they challenged the Speaker, the intent was exactly the same. They disagreed with the ruling of the Speaker knowing full well what they were doing was a futile effort.

So that is when you are making a mockery, and it is strictly symbolic. Here we have a situation where there is urgency in this debate because there is no point bringing something up after the funeral, and the funeral is essentially today. I think it is critical that this be put on record as something that concerns the Members of the Opposition, whether the Government likes it or not. The reason the Government is saying that it should not be done is that we are wasting time.

Well, we have been in this Legislature now for going on two years. I do not think there is anyone in this Chamber who cannot be accused on occasion of having wasted some time. Every day there is some reason that there is a time wastage.

I think this is one that cannot be regarded as a time wasted, because I think it is an issue that has to be spoken of today. While one does not like to burn the Speaker, as the terminology is, I do not think this is an occasion where one can condemn the Opposition for having gone in opposition to the ruling of the Speaker. I think this is an issue that needs to be touched on today.

The other thing that concerns me is not only VIA Rail, Mr. Acting Speaker, but it is the fact that this Government has on numerous occasions stood up and argued that were not happy with what was happening at the federal level. They have gone on record many, many times of being opposed to what was occurring at the federal level. I can just identify a few of these.

Starting off with Agriculture where the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) said initially that in no way was he going to get involved in drought payments. He felt this was a federal responsibility and that the federal Government was the one that had the onus to come up with the drought payments. But he found himself painted into a corner. How did he get into that corner, Mr. Acting Speaker? He got painted into the corner by his colleagues in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

In other words, the federal Minister went to those provinces and laid the cards on the table and said, we want you onside. Grant Devine had an IOU because he had been given a billion dollars in drought assistance just before his election. So he had to come onside, and he agreed to pay a portion of the drought payment. Then they went to Don Getty, and he agreed to pay a portion of the drought agreement. Then our Minister was left in a situation where he was the odd man out and had no option but to knuckle under and become involved.

Likewise with crop insurance. This Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) said in no way would the

provincial Government get involved in paying a larger share of the crop insurance than what they currently were. Then again there was the divide-and-conquer approach taken by the federal Government. Lo and behold, in order to get a crop insurance program that appears to be one that has the potential to provide assistance to farmers, the provincial Minister had to agree to pick up a larger share.

* (2015)

We can go on and on. Every time there is an issue at the federal level, this Government says that they have done everything in their power to have a change in the decision made. Obviously their power is very weak because they have had no impact whatever. There are the drought payments; there has been the crop insurance. While one hates to admit it, one has to say that perhaps the third Party in this Legislature had more impact than what the Government did in any decision making at Churchill.

Here we had an issue where the Government was going to do everything in their power to make sure that there were increased shipments of grain to Churchill, and that Churchill would become a viable port and the seaway to the third ocean, and all the rest of it. They did absolutely nothing, they had no impact whatever, and therefore Churchill has virtually been unused for the last period of years.

The base closures; we have the Portage situation; we have the Kapyong Barracks; we have the movement of the militia headquarters. Here we have a Government that was going to do everything in their power to have that changed, and they do not even get a reply from their letter, Mr. Acting Speaker. These are the types of things that we have, and now we have a Government on the opposite side that stands up on a regular basis and says how opposed they are to the GST.

Here again, totally ineffective in having any changes made, and this seems a little bit strange when you are looking at four western provinces. You have Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, all with the Tory Government and in B.C. with an ultra-Tory Government. Here you have four provinces that cannot get together and have any impact, whatever, on the federal Government. It is not surprising that every time an issue comes up, this Government attempts to portray it as being strictly a federal issue. They say, you as Opposition, is there nothing at the provincial level that is of any concern since you always have to dwell on federal issues?

I think the significant thing is, Mr. Acting Speaker, that many of these federal issues are very, very significant and very important to the province. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Opposition, at the provincial level, to try and put pressure on the Conservative Government to have some impact on their Tory colleagues in Ottawa to get something done about these federal issues that impact very seriously on this province.

I think the old adage, Mr. Acting Speaker, that a Tory is a Tory is a Tory is going to come back to haunt them (interjection) because the Member for Lac du Bonnet

(Mr. Praznik) from his seat is chirping to the fact that a Liberal—we have known, and I want to make this clear to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) that the Liberals, when they were in power in Ottawa started off with several Liberal provincial Governments, when Trudeau left Government there was not one single Liberal Government at the provincial level and the same thing is happening to the Tories. Whether you like it or not, as provincial Tories, you are going to carry the can for your colleagues in Ottawa through to the day of the demise of this provincial Government.

Do not tell us that we are wasting time; do not tell us that we are concentrating on federal issues. We will continue to concentrate on federal issues until somebody on the opposite side of this House has the power to go to Ottawa and influence their colleagues down there. So far you have been a total blank that you cannot even get past Dorothy Dobbie. Dorothy Dobbie stops at the door and you cannot get by her. Until some time, whether it is the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) or someone else in this House has the power to go down and say something that is effective to Ottawa, we are going to keep challenging you to stand up on behalf of Manitobans and make sure that Manitobans are heard in Ottawa.

Your MPs from this province are not doing the job. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Ministers of this Cabinet to make sure that Manitoba's concerns are made in Ottawa. If you cannot have any influence on Ottawa, let somebody else in power that could have some effect. Because at this point in time, you have been totally ineffective.

* (2020)

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I wish to begin by saying that I do not consider what we have done today to be a waste of time. I believe that any time the Legislature in this country stands up for an issue as fundamental as the future of our rail service and our rail passenger service in Canada, that is not a waste of time. That is a public service, Mr. Acting Speaker. Let me make that clear right from the beginning. Because throughout the debate today, what I have heard is an incredible amount, and I hate to use this word, but it has been nothing short of whining from Members of the Government.

I really have a difficult time, Mr. Acting Speaker, in dealing with some of the comments that have been made, whether it be by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), or the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), or some of the other more vocal Members of the Conservative benches, because I have had the privilege of sitting in this Legislature since 1981, and I have seen when the shoe is on the other foot.

I remember the times when Conservative Members used to seek to have the normal business of the Legislature set aside to have matters discussed, matters of urgent and public importance. I remember when there were many of those sorts of debates on issues that I would have considered less fundamental than the issue we are dealing with today. I even remember times in which those debates were held at the request

of the Opposition. I remember we had a precedent in this House, which the current Speaker used earlier in this Session, whereby the normal business of the House was set aside by the previous Speaker, once again at the request of the Members of the then Opposition in the Conservative Party.

I know Members of my caucus sat here today and were somewhat amazed, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I am sure the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), who sat here after 1986, will remember the many resolutions that they moved in terms of matters of urgent and public importance. I felt like pulling out my file today and reading it into the record, but we already have records of that.

What I want to point to those who were vocal today and whining and yelling about the waste of public time, is that in attempting to defend the future of rail passenger service in Canada, something that is vital to Manitoba, you know our province was built as a transportation centre. My area of the province, northern Manitoba, has depended on rail service since the 1920s. That was our northern dream in Manitoba, the building of the Hudson Bay line. It is still a vital service; it is not an option for many communities. Many of the communities in my area are dependent on rail service. Whether it be Thicket Portage or Pikwitonei or Ilford, these are communities with no other form of transportation and they are asking the question today, where is the provincial Government on this issue?

They are going to be asking, where are they going to be in the upcoming months and years when we try and preserve the one-half of VIA that we have left, the one-half incidentally which does serve many northern and isolated communities and is vital to the Port of Churchill? They will be asking those questions and I think they would be surprised to read the comments from the Members of the Conservative Party, because they have spent most of the time in their speeches, either doing one of two things, one, complaining and whining about the fact that we are spending the time today debating this issue. As I said, Mr. Acting Speaker, I make no apologies for that. The second thing they have done, if they have not been whining about that is, well, in essence, defending the decisions to cut back on VIA Rail. I remember a number of comments that were made, including by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). It was interesting because, as was mentioned by the previous speaker, it illustrated one thing and that is that a Tory is a Tory is a Tory.

Whether the Manitoba Conservatives like it or not, whether they try, as the Minister of Justice did, a number of years ago, to try and disassociate themselves in terms of name with their federal counterparts, whether they try as they are doing now in the current situation to disassociate themselves in terms of policy from their federal counterparts, the fact is we heard comments from them earlier today which indicate they are in complete sympathy with what is happening. That is what I think was interesting, because I think what we saw today was something of a smoke screen on the part of the Conservatives.

They attempted to develop a huge argument that somehow we are wasting the time of the Legislature

by debating the future of rail passenger service in this country, which is nonsense. We have heard them talk about this being a Session where this has happened, there have been difficulties in terms of dealing with the public business, and that once again, is nonsense.

I can indicate that, as House Leader for the New Democratic Party, when we were approached before Christmas and we were asked to pass a number of Bills, we said, yes, to all the basic financial Bills that were requested of us by the Government. We said, yes, to a number of other Bills including The Municipal Assessment Act which was passed Friday.

* (2025)

Not only that, Mr. Acting Speaker, we turned around and we said we are willing to pass 10 other Bills, nine of which were introduced by the Government. Yes, they reflected priorities of the New Democratic Party. In a number of cases they were Bills that had developed when we were in Government. We said we were willing not only to pass the Bills the Government had requested but to pass 10 other Bills. In fact, we reached agreement on passage of nine. The only Bill out of the list of 10 that we gave to the Conservative Government they would not pass, would not even put it to a vote, was the Bill to provide greater protection to laid-off workers.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if we are talking about making the minority Government situation work, I would like anyone on the Conservative benches to say that is not cooperation. When we say that we want 10 Bills passed that were not even requested of us, and I have indicated again today, I indicated last week, I will keep indicating to the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) that those Bills, the consumer Bills, and the environment Bills, and yes, the Bill for plant closure protection, those are Bills that are on our agenda. We want them passed through the Legislature in the second reading. We want them passed through the committee. We want them passed through third reading. That is important because no one on the Conservative Party who knows what is going on can say that we have not been attempting to make the minority Government situation work. If that is not proof, I do not know what is.

I would suggest if there is anyone in this Legislature, if any Party at the current point in time is not attempting to make the minority Government situation work, it is the Conservative Party. Their statements today clearly reflected that.

Surely there was clear consensus, certainly amongst the two Opposition Parties that VIA Rail was a major issue of importance. They decided they were going to whine, and they were going to complain, and they were going to put up a big fuss about the fact that we are spending today discussing VIA Rail as if this was some indication they were blockaded in being the Government. I say to you, as I said before, we passed the Bills they wanted passed and we offered to pass more. That is the kind of co-operation they are getting from the New Democratic Party, and from the Liberals, I believe, who supported the passage of those Bills as well.

What we are seeing is a situation develop, that I really think the true mentality of the Conservatives is

coming through today. I think it was indicated best by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) earlier and a number of other speakers, and that is they are frustrated. They are frustrated because they do not have the sort of absolute power they would like to have by having a majority.

Having been in Government and been in Opposition, having been in Government when this Conservative Party rang the bells for literally weeks on end, I know what paralyzing the Legislature is all about; that is what paralyzing the Legislature is all about. Participating daily in important debates, being willing to pass Bills through to committee when there is clear consensus from all Parties, and yes, at times saying, no, as we have said on Bills, such as Bill 31 on final offer selection. That is what being a responsible Party in this Legislature is all about, whether you be an Opposition Party or whether you be a Government Party.

I think the onus has to be on the Government to also make participation in this minority Government situation work. I believe we are becoming increasingly frustrated and we are seeing the true arrogance come through. I just asked myself today, after hearing the speeches of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), and others, what would they do if they had a majority? I can tell you I do not even want to think about what they would do. I do not even have to really ask the question because I remember what it was like when we had Sterling Lyon and a number of the existing Members at that time, the kind of arrogance that we saw. The kind of dictatorial sort of approach to government that we saw on behalf of the Conservative Party. I wonder if what we saw today was not an indication of that.

* (2030)

On VIA Rail they stand up and say how terrible it is that they were, as a Government, forced to debate the cuts by the Conservative federal Government on VIA Rail. I say, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the true attitude of the Conservatives came through today. It is they who increasingly are not making the effort to make this minority Government situation work. The choice really is theirs in terms of the current situation and the current minority Government.

I would suggest they would be far less arrogant and far more open on issues such as this in the future, because I think any responsible Government in the current situation would be saying, yes, on a day such as this, of all times. This day, I think, will be marked down in Canadian history as a black day for this country. I believe that we as Members of the Manitoba Legislature can be proud and we will be proud in years to come. Perhaps we were unable to stop it, but at least we said to the Conservative Party of Canada in this most destructive act in terms of this country that this was not the route to go and we fought the good fight, Mr. Acting Speaker, and warned them in the future we will continue to fight to save passenger rail service, whether it be in this province or in Canada. Yes, we will bring in emergency debates; we will use every tactic available to us. Thank you.

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Acting Speaker, I rise to speak on this issue. I did not think, as a Member of the Government or as a citizen of Manitoba, that, I guess, I would ever be standing to speak about the cutbacks on VIA Rail and the decimation of the railway service as far as passenger services in Manitoba or in Canada.

I grew up in a railroad family. My father took the train to work every day to the Transcona Shops. I know what the railway meant to our family. We never had a car. In fact, my father never drove a car, and if they went they took the bus in town, and when they went out of town they took the railroad. Until after he passed away, it would be heresy for me to get on an airplane. I had to take the train. So I have travelled Canada by rail all my life, pretty well, and now I am afraid, when I do not have somebody watching me, I am like everyone else and I take the airplane. It is a shame, because I do like the train, and I have made sure that my family has been on it lots of times as well.

I think one of the things about this debate today—and I was listening to the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) saying that he is suggesting that we are arrogant because we did not want this debate today. Mr. Acting Speaker, this debate is too late today; the funeral is held today. If this debate was going to be held it should have been weeks ago, because that is when possibly something could be done about it, and certainly the Minister in charge of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) has done everything he could in this way.

I think the great regret is the number of jobs that are going to be lost in Manitoba. For railroaders it is a way of life, and I am really sad to see that we will not have this type of job around Manitoba the same way, and one of the things that we want to make sure is that we look after the people who will be laid off.

We want to make sure as well that the trains keep running to northern communities where they have no other way of transportation. We have areas where we have the Campers' Special that used to go every weekend, and my family as well, because of course railroaders were some of the main people who went to these remote areas between here and Capreol, because they had passes; they developed some of these lakes. Our family had a place for many, many years at Malachi, and so it was a weekend excursion. I do not know what these people are going to do, because they do not have roads into those areas. I think the only way is a rough road into South Lake and then a long, long boat ride. It is virtually impossible to get to some of these areas.

When I read the transcript of the legislative committee, at least the parliamentary committee on this issue, the one thing I noticed was that they decided to hold the public hearings in Ottawa. I guess that is what is wrong with our parliamentary system today. They do not get out of Ottawa often enough. They do not come to the West and ask the people who are concerned. They expect us to go to them. It has not mattered which Party gets in power. If the NDP ever gets in power, it will not change. There is a curtain that falls over MPs once they get there. They forget the roots of where they come from.

One of the areas that they certainly should have come—they should have had to take train rides just to see what it is like in the West, and the distances we have to travel.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): On a point of order, the Honourable Member for Transcona.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Acting Speaker, without meaning any discourtesy to the Minister in interrupting her remarks, I wonder if she might submit to a question at the conclusion of her remarks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): That is not a point of order, but is the Minister ready to submit to a question?

Mrs. Hammond: I am making my remarks, Mr. Acting Speaker. I will continue to do so.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am in a position, as Minister of Labour, where we will be meeting with the employees and the Government to set up an adjustment committee for the employees in Manitoba who will need to be either retrained, or to find new jobs for them. I want to assure the House that we take that very seriously and that we have been in touch with both the union and the VIA Rail management to make sure something will happen for the employees as soon as they knew their jobs would be cut.

Getting back to what has happened with VIA Rail, I believe that as a Government I do not think the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) can really accuse us of being arrogant because we are upholding the Speaker's Ruling. Surely that is the responsibility of the Members of this House that when a ruling comes down which is not made in your favour, you possibly swallow and go on and debate this issue at another time. The Speaker did give instances when it could happen.

I really feel that it is certainly incumbent on us to be aware of what is happening in our province and VIA Rail. The Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) has made numerous representations, even to the point of making representation to the Liberal task force that went across. So they did not miss any opportunity to make representation to the federal Government on behalf of VIA Rail employees and on behalf of Manitobans.

When we live in the West, things like the railroad are important to us. I do understand that it is easier often to get in your car and travel. It is certainly much faster to go by plane, but there is something very wonderful about having the railroad and to hear the trains coming and going and to go down to the station. I cannot tell you how many hours I have spent meeting people at the Union Station, and how often it was that I have travelled myself on the train.

So I know this service is important to Manitobans. It is important to Westerners. Possibly that is why we

are fighting for it a little harder than other people are, because it is important. Even when we lived in the East I used to hop the train to go shopping if I wanted to go into Toronto or if I wanted to go into Montreal.

I think that for the Members opposite to suggest, because we did not want this debate today that we did not care, is erroneous. We care very much, but to have the debate today when the last train is out to me is far, far too late. This debate, if it was going to be held, should have been held weeks ago and not on the last day.

Certainly, for us to all stand up and say we care about the employees, we care about the railroad, we do, and the Opposition Members do not have a stranglehold on this particular issue. We have done everything possible that we could do. Hopefully, they will take a look at what is left of our passenger service and they will upgrade it and make it into something that it once was and something that it could be again.

Mr. Kozak: Mr. Acting Speaker, I sincerely regret that the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) could not see her way clear to submitting to a question that I wanted to pose to her. The fact is, right now, today, friends and neighbours of mine in my home community, my constituency, are being laid off. The Minister indicates to us that the adjustment program for these people is not in place and she will make an announcement in due course.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there should be an advance plan for matters such as this. We had ample warning of exactly what the Mulroney Government intended to do, and I would suggest to the Minister that I would hope she could table in this House her plans for a credible adjustment program just as soon as possible.

* (2040)

My intention was to ask her about this adjustment program in a friendly way. I do not believe the Minister is trying to stonewall me. I certainly hope she comes forward with a credible plan real fast, because I am getting very concerned, Mr. Acting Speaker, at the fact that I cannot do a damn thing on behalf of my constituents without some information that I am waiting for from this Minister.

I would like to continue my remarks this evening on a nostalgic note, for my very first childhood recollection, Mr. Acting Speaker, is of walking to the CN beach tracks in north Transcona with my father, as a very young boy, to watch the trains. Walking along the cinder sidewalk along Oxford Street, at that time, stopping along the way at the artesian standpipe and the burnt-out hydro power station, that is a very powerful memory, Mr. Acting Speaker. It is the first memory from my childhood and should say something about the importance of railway travel in this country to me personally.

I remember later riding the beach train up to Grand Beach on weekends, soot and cinders from the steam engine flying into my face, and many well remembered trips by rail to visit Toronto, Duluth, Minneapolis, Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver.

Railway employment in Transcona, Mr. Acting Speaker, as most Honourable Members know, once

constituted more than one-half, in fact, essentially all of the gainful employment in my community. The Minister of Labour's (Mrs. Hammond) own statistics indicate that by 1986 only 12.4 percent of the working population of Transcona was employed in the transportation and storage industries.

I am all for progress and restructuring of our economy, but I would suggest that our federal Government has totally disregarded, certainly in recent years, the economic viability of a sound, thriving railway industry in this country. I do not think they care one whit about it. I do not know why. Perhaps it is because constituencies with substantial railway worker populations do not tend to vote Tory. I can think of no other reason because there are sound economic reasons for perpetuating the rail industry in this country.

An Honourable Member: Give us 10.

Mr. Kozak: The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) makes light of this issue and invites me to put 10 good reasons on the record. I will ask him for leave to continue my remarks until I have placed 10 good reasons on the record, Mr. Acting Speaker. As a matter of honour, I hope he will oblige me with leave.

The fact is, Mr. Acting Speaker, unlike other forms of transport in this country, passenger rail is not simply receiving subsidies. At the same time as it receives subsidies, as all other forms of transport do in this country, passenger rail in this province is providing subsidies. Annually, over the last five years, VIA Rail has subsidized Canadian National and Canadian Pacific, a private corporation, to the tune of \$200 million a year for track rental. No other form of transportation in this country is required not only to carry its own operation but to subsidize unrelated corporations.

I would suggest, Mr. Acting Speaker, that passenger rail in this country, particularly in the last five years under the present Government, has been systematically discriminated against by the requirement that they subsidize other unrelated corporations, specifically the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National.

Air Canada, which until recently was publicly owned, has made substantial profits in recent years. A low profit of \$45 million in 1987. Canadian Airlines, a \$30 million profit in 1988, supposedly without Government assistance. Smaller carriers were also able to show a profit. Air Ontario recorded profits of \$9.5 million in 1987. Greyhound Canada made \$17.6 million in 1987 without receiving Government financing. But that is not the whole story. Every one of these operators was massively subsidized to a far greater extent than VIA Rail ever has been in this country.

Comparing rail travel to other modes of transportation, Mr. Acting Speaker, I suggest is like comparing apples and oranges. The Government funds airport construction and air traffic control services through our tax dollars. Conversely, railways are responsible for maintaining their tracks, their depots and their equipment, and providing signalling and traffic control services. The Canadian Air Transport

administration, which provides all support services to airlines in Canada, has an operating budget of \$542 million this year.

This figure is remarkably similar to the \$536 million paid to VIA Rail in 1987. What would Air Canada's balance sheet look like if it had to share the costs of the \$32 million expansion of Winnipeg International Airport or the \$381 million Terminal 3 project at Pearson International Airport in Toronto? -(interjection)-

The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) expresses disbelief but the figure is, I assure him and I assure Members of this Government, \$381 million in federal money for one airport terminal alone. They complain about the subsidy for VIA Rail and imply that no one else is being subsidized to a similar level.

Sheer sophistry, what of the bus lines and trucking companies? Are they expected to construct and repair the highways and roads? No. Again the taxpayers are saddled with the burden. The taxes paid by Greyhound or trucking firms are in no way commensurate to the wear and tear they inflict on the nation's road system. In 1986, I point out, there is a \$1.8 billion shortfall in maintaining roads in Canada. Is that not a subsidy? Yes, it is. There is no other way of viewing it. Is it fair to say that VIA Rail is the only transportation service that receives a subsidy? No, it is not. Those who suggest it is have a hidden agenda which involves concealing this very basic fact.

Mr. Acting Speaker, you indicate to me that I have only one minute remaining. I believe that the interjection of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) earlier, requesting that I place 10 reasons on the record will result in the Government granting me leave to continue my remarks. I would suggest to them that I expect that leave.

Indeed transportation subsidies are an essential investment in economic development. Without Government-subsidized roads, bridges, airports and rail lines, the Canadian economy could never have been developed, especially in the Atlantic, western and northern regions of the country. We are looking today at the thin edge of the wedge because the objective of the Mulroney Government is not simply to wind down VIA Rail, it is to wind down the whole industry of railways in this country and lay thousands of people out of work with the objective of privatizing on very satisfactory terms for their corporate friends.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member's time has expired.

Mr. Kozak: Mr. Acting Speaker, I ask for leave. I note that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery), who challenged me to place 10 reasons on the record, now denies me leave to do so. I will bow to his opinion. Thank you.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Mr. Acting Speaker, thank you for allowing me to take part in this debate this evening on the announced cuts that are taking place today right across this country to end about half the passenger routes of VIA Rail in Canada and putting

some 2,700 workers out of work in this country, over 150 of whom are here in the province of Manitoba.

What I heard this afternoon, or my wife actually did, on the news, would shock most Members, that on the day we have announced 2,700 job losses and closure of half of VIA's track, would you believe that we have also announced that there will be a luxury train in this country, a new luxury train called The Royal Canadian that will charge passengers between \$1,500 and \$3,500 per person one way from eastern Canada to Vancouver. We are putting a new train on the tracks, a train for the wealthy. There will be individual rooms; there will be television; there will be showers, there will be VCRs; there will be all the amenities.

So what we are saying to average Canadians, no, you cannot have basic transportation in the form of VIA Rail, but yes, for the wealthy, we will give roadbeds; we will provide CPR roadbeds and allow trains to travel across this country provided you pay the costs. We will provide the right-of-way for the wealthy and we are going to railroad people off the track for average Canadians, because essentially, that is what has been announced.- (interjection)-

* (2050)

Mr. Acting Speaker, the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) says who is paying for the service. I am assuming that this train will be paid for by its passengers. I am assuming that will be the case, but we, as Canadians, are in fact going to be providing the roadbed.

Now, to my point; it will be very interesting for Canadians to compare what rental rates this new train will have as compared to what VIA has been paying to both CN and CP, because VIA has been paying over \$100 million a year to CNCP for the rental of the roadbed. That is all for the right-of-way and even that is conditional upon the freight rates, the freight trains and the express trains moving the passenger service off the track and giving those trains the priority. So not only do they pay over \$100 million in rental fees to those two railways, they do not have any running rights or priority in terms of moving passengers along the line.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if this is what is occurring, and here we have the Conservatives today in this Legislature trying to set the scenario that somehow Members of the Opposition are slowing down the workings of this Legislature and impeding the work of this Legislature, and somehow trying to create an issue that here is an Opposition that is obstructing and is not allowing this House to function. They had better do some serious rethinking of their position, because I believe that most Manitobans will say, it is about time that somebody started standing up for Manitobans.

We have nothing but apologies for federal Tories from the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). He has been writing little letters to Ottawa complaining. He has not been speaking out. He gets up in the Legislature and says, we are as sorry as everyone else about these cuts and we really do not like them, but were they prepared to challenge some

of those moves made by other citizen groups to fight their brothers in Ottawa?

I have some difficulty with the position of the Liberals, I really do. I am glad I am here to support their position in fighting for the citizens of this country and for the workers on the railway, but let us not forget that policy direction was set by their former colleagues under Trudeau.

They created a new entity called VIA Rail. They said this would be the future of Canadian passenger transportation and then they cut off the funding. They basically said, here is a bunch of old cars, here is a bunch of run-down engines, make it work, provide service. So what could happen? -(interjection)-

The Minister of Housing (Ducharme) said there was the push campaign, well Mr. Acting Speaker, if it was the push under the Liberals, you need a donkey today to pull this train across the country under the Tories, because it is very clear that the Bennett buggy of the '30s has nothing on the Tory policies of today; the Bennett buggy is there in spades on the tracks of this country.

Some interesting statistics that I have just gleaned from some reports, and this was an article by a Julius Lukasiewicz and he is a professor who teaches at Carleton University's Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. When the argument about subsidy, that we cannot subsidize any more the rail transportation, in his article he writes, and I quote, "Every year Canadian taxpayers spend about 10 times as much on roads, and twice as much on air transport as on VIA Rail." Did you know that, Mr. Acting Speaker?—10 times on our roads and twice on our air, and this analysis, I am told in his article, was done by IBI Analysis out of Toronto to look at VIA Rail costs and subsidies.

To run a railroad into the ground, to charge them basically one-sixth of the subsidy that we are putting into it as your running rights and not give them any priorities on the track, what do we expect? We will have the Canadian people turning their backs on the service. Absolutely. And you know, my Leader earlier today talked about wrath on both your houses when he condemned both the Liberals and the Conservatives. He was right on. Obviously, this is a dark day in Canadian history.

A quote from 100 years ago in this country, 100 years ago from the federal Liberal leader, Alexander Mackenzie, was in the paper, and I quote, "Building a continuous passenger railroad link between Vancouver and Montreal was an act of insane recklessness." Today the heritage that the Conservatives are leaving Canadians, and I will repeat the Liberal leader's words, is "an act of insane recklessness" in tearing down this railroad. Fortunately, Mr. Acting Speaker, the roadbed will be there, and future Governments with a lot more foresight will be able to rebuild a service that all Canadians can be proud of. These people here in this Legislature will not be here to apologize for their federal brothers and sisters.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): I rise this evening to put a few comments

on the record in regard to this debate, because of the fact that, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have seen this Legislature do some very strange things over the last couple of weeks. Indeed, it has lost its direction in terms of the way that the Opposition Members have been dealing with matters in this Legislature over the last few days. That does not say the issue beforehand is not of great importance to us and, in fact, to all Manitobans, and indeed Canadians as well.

Losing a rail service, especially in the prairie provinces, is not an easy thing for any of us, especially those of us who have grown up in the rural areas of this province. As a youngster, and growing up in rural Manitoba, I can relate to the necessity of a train, and I can relate to the fact that many people from rural Manitoba, especially at the western side of this province, would on many occasions need to take the train to travel to the capital city of our province to do their essential business and then to return to the rural part of the province. But indeed, as we evolved as a society and as a province, that service was no longer required, and other means of transportation took its place. So we saw that the passenger rail service to our small communities did vanish and cease eventually because it was not being used.

* (2100)

Mr. Acting Speaker, I guess that is what we are seeing here today. It is that, although the service is very important to us as western Canadians, because we have evolved as a society, other methods of transportation have indeed taken over some of the services that were provided by the railways. Today Canadians are using other methods of transportation rather than using railway method of transportation.

Although we have heard many speeches here this afternoon and this evening, I wonder how many Members of the Opposition have in recent times taken the passenger trains to destinations either inside of this province or outside of this province. I wonder how many times our Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), as an example, has taken the passenger train to his constituency, or has he found it more expedient to take other forms of transportation back home? What does this say? It simply says that as a society we have evolved and therefore we are opting for other methods of transportation. But that does not mean that we should abandon all transportation services via the railway in this country. Indeed, we as a Government saw that it was important for us to make presentations before the federal Government to ensure as much of the service as possible could be retained, especially for those important areas within our province that need that transportation service. So, Mr. Acting Speaker, (interjection)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please.

Mr. Derkach: We did see the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) make presentation to the federal Government, a submission by the Province of Manitoba to the federal announcement on passenger train service cuts. We saw a presentation made on VIA Rail to the

House of Commons Transport Committee by the Government of the Province of Manitoba, the City of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Transport and General Workers, the Manitoba Federation of Labour, also the Liberal Party of Manitoba, and the New Democratic Party of Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that task was undertaken very early, after the announcement was made that VIA Rail would be cutting its services. But I ask the question, where was the Opposition at that point in time? If they saw that this was such an important matter that needed to be brought to the attention of this House, why did they not bring that matter to the attention of this House in an emergency debate at that point in time? Why did they wait till the very last day to bring this matter to the House? Mr. Acting Speaker, I suggest to you and to Members of this House, and to this province, that indeed the reason that the two Opposition Parties brought this forth today was purely for petty political reasons.

An Honourable Member: Oh, oh.

Mr. Derkach: The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says, oh, no, here we go again, but he is the one who stands up in his place and rants and raves about some of the irregularities that go on in this House from time to time. Just last week, Mr. Acting Speaker, we saw the two combined Oppositions speak about the importance of observing the rules and regulations of this House and how important it was to obey the rulings of the Speaker. The Government agreed that was important, that we had to abide by the rulings of the Chair, and so we listened to two days of debate, lecturing us as a Government, on how it was important to observe the rulings of the Speaker, and we said that was fine, we had to observe the rulings of the Speaker. We never objected to that.

We had a lecture by the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), when she was a young woman, a young girl, watching the Legislature, the parliamentary sessions, and how she learned to respect the Chair, and how she learned to respect the proceedings in the House. But then this week, Mr. Acting Speaker, everything changed. Neither of those two Parties opposite saw fit to support the Speaker's Ruling, just today. I ask people of this province, does that not smell of hypocrisy? I think it is the worst kind of hypocrisy, and Manitobans should know that both these Opposition Parties, the NDP and Liberal Opposition Parties are not very credible in this province. They speak out of two sides of their mouths. They only support what is politically expedient for them, at that point in time, and that is not how the business of this Legislature should take place.

I think that all Manitobans are looking at the Legislature today and wondering what the Opposition Parties are really up to. What is the importance of conducting business in this House? How many days have we sat in this Legislature? Over 100 days now? And yet the Estimates of the Department of Education have not been heard. I think that is the matter of business that has some urgency to it, and that is a

matter of business that should be proceeded with, but unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), her cohorts, the Leader of the third Party (Mr. Doer), have not seen it that way to date, Mr. Acting Speaker.

With regard to VIA Rail, I have to concur with my colleagues, that we are prepared to act on behalf of those individuals who will experience difficulty through layoffs, through losing their jobs. My colleague, the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) has indicated that she is prepared to go to work to make sure that those people are treated fairly, especially those people who are going to lose their jobs in this unfortunate time. My department, Mr. Acting Speaker, is also prepared and willing to deal with each case on an individual basis and to ensure that we have the training available for those individuals because they need it. We know the importance of losing a job to a family. We know how important it is for a family to be able to find alternative work, for the bread earners in that family to be able to have some retraining, if that is necessary, and we are prepared to do that for the residents of this province.

We did not wait to do that until this last day. That plan has been in effect for a long time and we are prepared to deal with it. It is unfortunate, and I think this is a sad day in this Legislature, when we have deteriorated to the level that we have in the debate that goes on in this Legislature. I wish that Members of the Opposition would really search their souls and ask themselves why they are here, and we would continue with the business that is before this House rather than trying, in an obstructionist way, to curtail and to stop the important things that are supposed to be done in this Legislature. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Acting Speaker, I find it very ironic that sometime back in history two-and-a-half million Canadians forged a passenger rail from sea to sea through very difficult times in that period of swamps and mountains, frozen terrain, rivers and what have you, with limited technology and limited equipment, yet 10 times that many people in Canada cannot sustain it under a Tory Government. A bad Tory Government who in one fell swoop have destroyed the national dream.

We all have a little nostalgia about railroads and we could go on and on about that. I come from a railway family, one where my great-grandparents were railway contractors in Scotland and after that my father worked for 35 years in immigration just over here on Water Avenue where hundreds of thousands of immigrants came through Winnipeg to be settled by the rails; without them it would have been impossible. I am pleased to say that the first summer job I had was with the railway as a despatcher in the old Morse code days, over in the shops that have now been eliminated. Three of my brothers started their career there. So we know a little bit about railways, and we have it certainly in our heart what railroading is all about.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) gets up and says he has been seeing strange things go on in the House. Well, I have not been in public life very long,

so I am not that experienced, but I saw some of the strangest things today go on that I have ever seen. First of all, he accuses us of burning the Speaker. This Government has a reputation of burning more Speakers more rudely, more arrogantly than any Government I have ever seen. This, the bell-ringing Tories.

Mr. Acting Speaker, might I say, that talk about burning Speakers, their arrogance when they walked out of the meeting and when they did not have the common sense to come and apologize to this House, did they realize the time and effort and heartbreak they caused our good Speaker? Did they understand the cost of taxpayers' money to go on because a simple apology for a mistake made was not corrected. So do not tell me we burn Speakers, it is you that burn Speakers and you burned speakers time after time in history and you continue to do it to this day.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the other funny thing I saw was that after Question Period today I wanted to ask - (interjection)- Oh, you think it was no work for what he had to do? I can tell you it took plenty of time to come up with that decision, and it is because of your arrogance and not the apology.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

* (2110)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order please; order please.

An Honourable Member: How do you know?

Mr. Rose: How do I know? I will tell you after.

The other strange thing I saw, Mr. Acting Speaker, was the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) get up with a tirade of personal attacks on me because I stood in this House, which is my right and my obligation on behalf of the people of Manitoba, to point out clearly that the handicapped, the underprivileged in this province are treated more callously, with more disdain, with less respect than in any other province in Canada. They have less capital that they get, less returned earnings. They are 5 percent below the other next lowest province in Canada for earnings under social assistance without tax credits.

He says I have no respect. Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to give a challenge—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Rose: I challenge you that I have spent three times as much time with the handicapped in the last year than that whole Cabinet put together. Mr. Acting Speaker, this callous Tory Government chooses to eliminate the passenger service at a time in history when our bridges, our highways are in deplorable condition and need repairs.

Now what are we going to do? We are going to load them further with more buses, more cars, or transports and what have you. Who is going to pay for this? I

would wager, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the cost to bring those up even to minimal standards, to take the traffic they get today, will cost more than what we would have spent to bring VIA Rail up to standards that are acceptable.

Why is it that almost any other nation in the world—if you go to Europe, I have travelled extensively on the trains in Europe, or if you go down to the United States on Amtrak, and I go down there extensively too—they are expanding their service? In California they are doubling and tripling the rail service throughout that state. Yet in this country we take a cowardly approach, a silly approach, the unbusinesslike approach. The Tories like to say they know how to manage. Well, they do not know how to manage when they destroy the national rail system when every other nation that I am aware of in this world is building up their passenger rail service, speeding it up, making it into the 21st Century.

Now I am sure the callous Tories, Mr. Acting Speaker, have not taken into account the aspects of the rail, for instance, in emergencies, and what we would do without the rail, for instance, up north here, when we had the forest fires, to move men and equipment and supplies, when it is difficult in those times to bring aircraft in because of bases and what have you.

They forget so soon of how valuable—I recall the flood in 1950. The only way we could get to work from one end of Winnipeg to the other was on the railway. Because of the high lines they were above the flood stages. We got in and out of many of our places of business, particularly over in St. Boniface, by rail. These are the sort of things rail can continue to do. I think what I have said is that we have just seen the callousness of the Tories in saying that this is just to be discarded at their whims, and without any discussion at all with the people in an election campaign, just go about it and that is it.

I note that federal Members of the Cabinet who make these decisions, it is all right for them because they have their own methods of transportation, unlimited transportation, unlimited to the point that if they want to go somewhere, they just pick up a private aircraft. Well, most Canadians do not have that sort of privilege. They do not have the privilege of just phoning up for an aircraft to be ready on the tarmac, and one as a backup like the Prime Minister does—and indeed fly a couple of his limousines down to Costa Rica, one as a backup, and I do not think either one of them was used because there was no gasoline.

The average Canadian, most Canadians, virtually all Canadians do not have this sort of resource. It is this extravagance and waste of money on behalf of the arrogance of the Tory Government, the cousins of those who sit opposite here, is why we cannot afford to bring our national railroad, VIA, into the current trends and into current styles like other countries have, because we are blowing it on other non-priority items.

I think this is indeed, like was said before, Mr. Acting Speaker, a real sad day for Canada, a sad day for those people who have gone on railways to see some of the most beautiful sights in the world—if you go through

the Rockies, through Banff and Lake Louise, if you go through from Sault Ste. Marie to Sudbury in the fall and see the autumn leaves.

When you do like this man who was mentioned yesterday, the VIA Rail buff from Pittsburgh—he found out at the last moment that the train was cancelled because of mechanical breakdown and then he found out that he could not go two days later because there were not going to be any trains at all. He said he was offered a ride by bus but decided to get his money back. He says, I simply cannot believe—this is an American and this is the sort of story we are going to hear over again thousands and thousands of times, the millions and millions of dollars of tourist dollars that we lost—he says, I simply cannot believe that your Government is doing this, this 20-year-old man said. In Canada and the U.S., trains are an integral part of our culture. We both have big countries and not everybody wants, or can afford to fly. In my opinion, if you do not have a good train system you do not have a strong country.

Well I believe that. He has hit it right on and, Mr. Acting Speaker, it is a real pity that from now on tourists and Canadians, people from all over the world will not be able to enjoy these most scenic train rides that perhaps you can get in the world in untouched virgin territory. Thank you very much.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Sometimes people put into words and notions concepts and ideas much better than we can on our feet in this House, and we share and borrow from them to express our emotions and our feelings about certain subjects. I recall a song that Gordon Lightfoot wrote and sang about, as he said, a time in this fair land when the railroad did not run. When he sang his railroad trilogy he was singing of days gone by, but unfortunately that song, meant to be historical in its content, may also be a sign of times to come.

This debate today is as much about the future as it is about the past. This debate, condemning the Conservative Government's cutbacks in VIA service is an important part of a continuing struggle to save Canada's railroads from the hacking and slashing of a Conservative federal Government. This debate is about a provincial Conservative Government as well, a Government in Manitoba that has totally failed to fight their federal cousins as they dismantle the rail system piece by piece and day by day.

I have listened with care today to what some of the provincial Conservatives have said in response to the efforts by this Legislature to put into perspective the damaging effects of the cutbacks in VIA service, which are taking place as we now speak, and are already having and will continue to have on Manitobans and our communities for so many years to come. It is not surprising what they have to say, but it is worth noting nonetheless.

Much of what provincial Tories have to say about VIA services is a muted, not too distant repetition of what Brian Mulroney is saying. Much of their language is the same, as is much of their approach. As I said

earlier, that commonality of thought should not be shocking. After all, a Tory is a Tory is a Tory is a Tory. However, the ambivalence of their speeches today is in sharp contrast to what they have been pretending to do for so long now. Their contradictions are breaking out all over in their speeches today. Today Conservatives in Manitoba had a choice. They could have stood up against their federal counterparts and in the strongest terms condemned what a Conservative Government in Ottawa is doing to our rail system. Had they stood up against Ottawa, they would have at the same time stood up for Manitobans, because what Ottawa is doing is against what Manitobans want. By not standing up against Ottawa, they have not stood up for Manitoba. Instead, they have rolled over for Ottawa, and instead of a spirited fight against these cutbacks, they offered little more than feeble excuses for their own lack of success in fighting Ottawa, and lukewarm rationalizations for Conservative cutbacks that are devastating this province.

* (2120)

Perhaps the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said it best. He said, and I quote: "It is tragic that the law of economics cannot be defied." That statement says it all. In his attempt to justify these cutbacks in economic terms, our own provincial Finance Minister could just as well have been his federal counterpart, Michael Wilson, standing in his seat in Parliament. A Tory is a Tory indeed. In Ottawa or in Winnipeg a Tory is a Tory. They think alike, they sound alike, they are alike. To a Tory, this is a matter of bottom-line economics. They share across the country a balance-line mentality that results in cutback after cutback after cutback without regard to those they hurt. Once again today we have seen that constant, consistent, ongoing, to-be-expected Pavlovian response by the Minister of Finance and many of his colleagues.

There is another philosophical undercurrent that runs through the Conservative speeches today. They would want us to believe that railroads are only a romantic notion and cost too much, and for that reason they must be cut because they are used too little. The Minister of Finance talked today about facing up to the reality, and I quote: "Canadians have chosen to use other forms of transportation." He told us that is the reason that the railroads must go, that is the cause of these cutbacks. That is an interesting comment because it so closely parallels what Mr. Lawless, one of the prime architects of the tearing apart of VIA, had to say earlier today as he was reported during the six o'clock news. His direct quote was: "Romanticism must give way to reality." The Minister of Finance uses the same language and notions as a person uses who is dismantling VIA.

That is an interesting reflection on how they think alike and the shared values they hold. The fact is that both of them are wrong. Brian Mulroney is wrong, just as Jean-Luc Pepin was wrong when he and the Liberal Government only a few years ago had their turn at tearing down the rail system when the Liberals cut back service across the country. At that time, and at this time, both the Conservatives and the Liberals use the same argument. They want us to believe that Canadians

do not value their rail system because they do not use it. The fact is that Canadians do use their rail system, but they do not use it as much as they would like to. They do not use it as much as they should because both Liberal and Conservative Governments have starved the system until service has deteriorated to the point where many Canadians who want to travel by rail do not do so because of the inconvenience.

Successive federal Governments have collectively pulled the rug out from under our rail system. They have cut back staff so that rail workers can not give the service that they would like to give to their customers and that the customers would like to have given to them. They have cut back funding so that everything from meals to accommodations has deteriorated. They have cut back trains so that schedules have become more than inconvenient. In many instances they are impossible. They do everything they can to drive passengers away from the rail system, and then they use the consequences of their own actions as the excuse to finish their task by eliminating much of the very same service that they set out to erode in the first instance.

Let there be no doubt about it. The destruction of VIA and the rail system is devastating Manitoba. Even the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) admitted today that the cutbacks in VIA Rail service that are taking place now, will cost over 150 Manitobans their jobs and their futures. I would suggest it is well over 150 Manitobans. No wonder so many Manitobans are so strongly opposed to these cutbacks in rail service.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) admitted today that it will cost anywhere from \$55 million to \$60 million, according to their calculations, each year. That is money taken out of the Manitoba economy, money that would help build this province, that is gone because of these cutbacks. Every year, \$55 million to \$60 million less in our economy because of these cutbacks.

Last Saturday I stood in front of the station, with many other Manitobans, to protest the cutbacks. As a group, we asked passing motorists to honk their horns to show their opposition to the dismantling of the country's rail system. That is something that is done in many demonstrations on many different occasions. But never before did I see such an overwhelming response from passing motorists with respect to that request to show their displeasure and disappointment with the federal Government and what it was doing to our rail system.

I would guess that over three-quarters of those who passed honked their horns, from semis to buses, to taxis, to passers-by in cars all the way from Hondas to Mercedes, although I can tell you that the Mercedes and the Lincolns honked their horns less. I want to also say, Mr. Acting Speaker, that not only have I seen the effect of cutbacks on Main Street in Winnipeg but I have talked to rail workers in Pikwitonei just after cutbacks to CNR were announced. I have shared with them their fears and their apprehensions as they worried about their jobs and how they would feed their families.

I have spoken many times with residents of Ilford, as they have expressed concern about constant and rampant increases in freight rates and the impact they

were having on their communities. I spent many long hours in the Gillam station, talking with rail workers and station workers as we waited for the Churchill train together. I have seen friends in Gillam laid off and transferred as a result of cutbacks in rail service. I have seen friends in Gillam quit the railroad out of frustration and fear for their future, as I have seen many others in Churchill do. I have spent many hours in conversation with passengers and staff as we passed away the hours on our way to Churchill and we reflected upon the importance of reliable rail service to that community.

I have visited with workers stationed in places like M'Clintock along the bayline, as a weight freight made its scheduled deliveries. Mr. Acting Speaker, these people are not romanticists as much as they are realists who truly understand the value of the rail and building and maintaining their communities and their country. They are people who must hear what we say today because so much of their very own future depends on how successful we are in today's debate in stopping the federal Government from continuing on with this destruction of the railroad.

Most Conservatives who have spoken today have repeatedly said that this debate is not necessary because the deed has already been done. Even the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger), who should welcome every opportunity to fight for Manitoba, called this debate a fruitless effort because the decision has already been made. He has given up the fight because he believes the fight to be over. Well, he was wrong, wrong, wrong, and wrong again.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if we do not stop what is taking place today, we will have to fight this battle again and again in this House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member's time has expired. The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Acting Speaker, today we have listened for many hours as Members of this House shared their concerns on the reduction of VIA Rail service in our province, indeed across the country. But I do not think there is one Member of this Assembly, or indeed a member of the public of Manitoba, who does not share the concern whenever an organization, a Government agency, a business reduces its expenditures in this province with the result of layoffs, of reduced purchasing, et cetera, all of which play a role in our economy.

Indeed, Mr. Acting Speaker, we all feel for those who have lost their jobs. That is a difficult thing to go through. Those who will have a reduction in service, who do use the train service which existed up today, will certainly regret that.

Mr. Acting Speaker, when I listen to the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) talk about railroads and the commitment of Canadians to the railroads, I would certainly agree that if you ask the vast majority of Canadians if they do support rail passenger service, they would say yes. If you ask them, though, what they are prepared to pay out of their tax dollars, out of their

income, to support that service, I think you would see a very different result to that question.

* (2130)

Mr. Acting Speaker, there are realities, and the Member for Churchill talks that we should not be looking at those realities, we should not be looking at those numbers. I expect that kind of speech, I expect that kind of remark, indeed that type of thinking, from the Member for Churchill and indeed the Members of the New Democratic Party. It certainly comes as no surprise to us or to Manitobans, but the the people of Canada, the people who are subsidizing each passenger to the tune of some \$100, people in my constituency, people in your constituencies who have to pay that out of their taxes each and every year, some \$600 million, that reality is important. It is one that is there and has to be reckoned with.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I heard the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) talk about subsidizing Air Canada. I ask the Member for Transcona, perhaps rhetorically, but I ask him how many times he has travelled on trains. Indeed, how many times have Members—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for Transcona, on a point of order.

Mr. Kozak: With the leave of the House, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would be pleased to answer the question of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): It is not a point of order. The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Praznik: I ask that rhetorical question indeed to all Members of this House; I ask it of your constituents. The reality, Mr. Acting Speaker, is that half a century ago, when 55 million passengers rode the trains in this country, we are now at some ridership of 6.4 million. Those people have gone to the airlines; they have gone to the highways. The Leader of the Opposition and others in this country have raised a constitutional argument about VIA, about the entry into Confederation of provinces and the promise of a rail line.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think the commitment was for a transportation link, one that is provided now by a national highway, the Trans-Canada Highway, one that is provided by airline service. If one wants to be very sticky about it, Mr. Acting Speaker, that particular one was for steam train service, yet we do not have that. That is obviously why that argument failed before the courts.

We heard comments today referenced by the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) to California. Here, I think, in that observation about California comes the crux of our railway passenger dilemma in Canada. California, one state approximately the size of our province, within its boundaries contains a population as large as our

entire country, with large urban areas relatively close to one another, where that kind of transportation service can compete economically with airlines and with road, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Yes, indeed we have a major problem with our rail service, and anyone who comes in—the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), in listening to her remarks today, spoke about a dream of national rail services, of travelling from coast to coast. Yes, we may all have that dream, but how do we make it a reality? I share the concerns that are there for the rail employees. I share the concerns of those whose incomes are dependent on that railway, those who do have some dependency on that rail system.

But the question that has not been answered by any Member of this Assembly, particularly a Member of the Opposition, is that \$600 million subsidy a year. Put that into perspective. Take a look at the budget of a Crown corporation like Atomic Energy of Canada, for example, whose total allotment is less than \$200 million a year. Put that into that context. Not one Member of the Opposition has come forward and said, yes, I am so much in favour of rail transportation that money can come out of this budget and we should not spend here or there, or that they are prepared to have increased taxation to pay for it.

The greatest hypocrisy of this debate today is when I look at Members of the New Democratic Party, with their “stop the GST.” When I heard the kind of remarks they were making about saving the railway service, the importance of it, I assumed they now supported the GST to pay for it. But they do not. It is a classical example of speaking out of both sides of your mouth at the same time. Maybe a former Member for Niakwa said you could do that in Opposition, but the people of this province and this country know better. They know, when they look at our province and they look at the country, that we as politicians will have and do now have a responsibility to come to grips with the funding problem, the funding catastrophe, the budgetary catastrophe our country is facing. We cannot raise the revenue that we spend. Mr. Acting Speaker, you can say, raise the GST or raise the income tax or increase corporate taxes, but you have to raise the money you spend. That is a reality, and it is the constituents of the Members for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) who have to pay for it, just as mine do.

If I may leave you with one parting thought, this Saturday there was a rail derailment in my constituency. Saturday evening I visited the site, and as I stood there and talked with railmen from CP Rail, we watched a passenger train, the first one, I believe, to traverse the repaired south line. The CBC was there, in all its glory, to record this derailment. As it filmed this passenger train, the cars reminded me of the Opposition benches opposite. They were virtually empty. The people were not there. When I hear of New Democratic Party Members of Parliament coming to Manitoba to speak to railway workers, they flew in, they did not come by train.

I say to all of us in this House that if we want a passenger rail service, Mr. Acting Speaker, people better

be prepared to use it. We have not seen that, and we have not seen anyone come to grips with that kind of expenditure or say, yes, they are prepared to see us have a GST to pay for it. I am waiting to hear that kind of remark from those who stand up here and make the kind of remarks that they do without touching the financial realities of the country. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): Mr. Acting Speaker, it gives me pleasure to rise and speak on this important Bill. Frankly, I feel like lying down and crying, a feeling I have had on similar occasions over the past few years. Like the Honourable Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), I am still an emotional railroader because I was born and brought up in the Canadian National Railways. I often say that my father, who was a telegraph operator and chief train dispatcher was very fortunate to have had most of his 47 years of service with the CNR in what I refer to as the golden age of steam. What bothers me, Mr. Acting Speaker, now this is a federal matter, granted, but the various provinces have been very remiss in not pushing for something to be done about rail service over the past many years. They bear some responsibility for not putting pressure on the respective federal Governments.

This killing of the Canadian, Mr. Acting Speaker, to me, is not a good, ethical, clean kill, like going up before a firing squad; it is more like a piece of inept butchery carried out by some crazed madman with a dull hatchet or axe.

At any rate, Mr. Acting Speaker, in North America, in the postwar period, the United States as well as Canada, we have done a good job in killing the passenger train which is alive and well in many other parts of the world, in most other parts of the world, including the Western industrialized world. The technology of the passenger train that exists today in Canada in the form of the Canadian and what cars are left from the CNR is technology of the 1930s, which was a very good technology.

In those days I had the occasion in the early '40s to have a ride on one of the United States streamliners—the Burlington Zephyr, the Chieftain, the Hiawatha, and so on. This one was the Chicago Northwestern 400. The name of the train was 400 because it covered the 400 miles from Chicago to Minneapolis-St. Paul in a running time of 400 minutes. Now this is 1930s technology. The train had a speedometer in the back lounge-observation car and it was generally cruising at about 90 miles per hour. In one long straight stretch it got up to 120. I have been on trains in Canada and the United States too, steam trains that have travelled at 90 miles an hour, and as recently as—well, at any rate, steam trains and also diesels, of course.

* (2140)

The technology has been there in other parts of the world, but it has been ignored in Canada. Now the Canadian was the first and only complete new passenger train to be built and put into service in North America in the postwar period. I forget just which, 1954 or '55. VIA Rail a few years ago had plans—by a few

years ago I mean 1988—had plans to completely refurbish it, starting in the fall and early winter of 1988, to take the Canadian piece by piece and more or less gut it, I suppose, and rewire it and replumb it and put in electric heating and so on, so that it would be up-to-date.

So the technology, if it had been taken advantage of, was there to build a good, modern passenger rail system in Canada over the last three or four decades. Unfortunately, and I must accept that it is history now, so let us not dwell on it, our own Liberal Government some 12, 15 years ago did not allow VIA Rail to get off to a good start. Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways took them to the cleaners, both in the price of the equipment that was turned over to VIA Rail, and also in the rail and running charges that have been charged since. These two railways do not give a tinker's damn about VIA Rail, or the Canadian, or the Super Continental or any other passenger train that is running over their lines. The various federal administrations have allowed this to continue.

I had occasion in 1988 to have two trips on the Canadian across Canada. I took one trip in June from Winnipeg to Toronto for our holidays and, later on in the fall, from Winnipeg to Vancouver. I enjoy the train travel, I must say, from the point of view of the many tourists and the train was booked solid in June.

One large group of passengers was retirees from United Airlines, a group that boarded the train in Vancouver and was travelling across Canada to Toronto and then taking United Airlines back to the States. Another couple was a retired bank manager and his wife from New Zealand, another a retired American couple from an aerospace firm. The breakdown of equipment and the lateness of arrival and so on was such that they said, we are glad we took this trip across Canada, but we would never do it again and would not recommend it to our friends. With decent equipment this would have been a very pleasant trip for them, Mr. Acting Speaker.

All these things have been ignored over the past couple of decades when, with some judicious capital investment in the form of new equipment and technology, a decent passenger service, both in the high density corridors from Windsor through to Quebec City and also the transcontinental lines, a good, efficient, modern service could have been built; one that, as far as the transcontinental service is concerned, while it might have needed some modest subsidy—not nearly what it does now—very well could have paid for itself and brought in many, many tourist dollars, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The trip we took to Toronto on the Canadian was 15 minutes late leaving Winnipeg and, we no sooner got out of the city, than the sleeping car—ahead of us fortunately—was found to be out of water, both drinking and flushing water. They could not do anything about it until it reached Thunder Bay in the morning.

The train kept continually being put into sidings waiting for freight trains to pass, so that we arrived something over two hours late in Toronto and, before getting into Toronto—this is in the middle of June—

in the morning, the air conditioning in the dining car went out and the dining car was simply a hot box for the rest of the trip. On the return trip, similarly after leaving Thunder Bay the observation dome car air conditioning went out and the only air conditioning we had was when the conductor opened the back door a bit. Fortunately they had some cold refreshments available, which rectified things to some small extent.

At any rate, this complete ignoring of the updating of equipment, the lack of ability to get decent equipment and maintain this properly has resulted in some of the low usage of the Canadian, in particular, by Canadians, but nevertheless during the summertime—well, from spring to fall—it is pretty well booked solid. I would take some issue with the observation from the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) who said there was virtually no one on the train the other night. They might have been up in the dome car, where he could not see them, or in their sleeping cars and so on. I would hazard a guess that the train was probably half-full, but at any rate, it is a sad day for Canada to see this go.

Rail transportation has a place, a very definite place, in all other countries in the world and it is operating well. Amtrak in the United States is another good example and, with proper planning and judicious investment it well could have been so in Canada. We hope that possibly in the future we might see it come again. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Hon. Edward Connerly (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I rise to say a few words in this emergency debate. Mr. Acting Speaker, I am not one who is apt to rise often in the House just to get up and speak and just to put myself on record on some issue. I ran to sit in this Legislature to be able to do something for the people of the constituency that I represent and for the people of Manitoba. What I have seen in this Session just abhors me—the conduct of the Opposition, the way that we are dragging this Session on and on and on, the phony issues that have been raised to drag on the debate, to drag on the House and to not deal with the issues that are very pertinent and very important to Manitobans.

* (2150)

Mr. Acting Speaker, this is going to be one of the longest sessions probably that the Legislature of Manitoba has ever seen, and we are not accomplishing very, very much. When I listen to the comments of the Opposition, what do I hear? They are trying to draw a thread between an unpopular federal Tory Government, and trying to link them to a provincial Government, a Tory provincial Government. If they did not use the theme, a Tory is a Tory is a Tory, I might have given them some credibility—(interjection)—Who gave them what money? The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) says we gave them our money. I can tell the Leader of the Opposition that I have not sent one nickel to Brian Mulroney. I am not a particular supporter of Brian Mulroney, and I do not agree with a lot of the things that he does.

But, Mr. Acting Speaker, we are sitting in this Legislature as Manitobans and we are supposed to be

dealing with the problems around Manitoba and the Manitoba issues. Now, I agree—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Connerly: —that there are 10,000 Manitobans involved in the railroad industry in Manitoba, and for those people, I have heard very little said about the workers involved. I have heard very little comment on the concerns of the workers, the people who will be affected by the cuts. Mr. Acting Speaker, I have a profound concern for those people, because there is trauma and there is a disruption in their lives and the dream that they had is being shortened and is being cut—(interjection)—See, the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) says, a Tory. They are not debating the issue, they are trying to link this Government, which has done an excellent job and has really been in favour with the people of Manitoba, to an unpopular federal Government. I am not very pleased with the cuts they made at CFB Portage, when they took that base out of there. And who did we see—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, order please.

Mr. Connerly: —alongside for a very short period of time, was the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) who was there for the vote that she would get and then was gone. She flew the coop as soon as there were no more votes to be had in that issue. The very fact that she was asking the Leader—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please. I would ask the Honourable Minister to keep his remarks to the debate.

Mr. Connerly: Absolutely. We are talking about the hypocrisy of the Opposition in wanting this debate today. And that is what we have, a debate on hypocrisy. I am concerned about the necessity of an adequate railroad system, and I support our Minister of Transport who has gone to Ottawa fighting for what is required in the transport system. I will tell you, I will put my faith in that Member before I will put any faith in Members opposite.

We talk about a Party opposite that is concerned about the province and about the people of Manitoba. We heard the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) get up and wax eloquent, and what did he do when he was Minister of Highways? He paved the road to the Waterhen where his own private cottage is. That is the sort of thing that the Member opposite did. The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) who chirps from his seat, but when we were in the Estimates or had an opportunity to go into Estimates for the WCB over injured workers, he was not even here to debate it. His leader, the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), refused to allow us to debate the concerns of the injured worker.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the railroad system is one that has gone through a lot of severe change. I have unloaded rail cars that come from California. I have

loaded cars that have gone to the United States and have gone to B.C., that have gone east, but the need for those cars, the need for that type of transportation has disappeared. So we go to a different mode. We are going to trucks. They are quicker. They can be loaded at the warehouse. We used to have to load the trucks, drive to the railway station, unload the truck into the car. Those times have changed.

The need for passenger service in some parts of western Canada and Canada in the whole has changed. I took the train once, and I went to Montreal in 1967. The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) when she was questioned, how did you come? She flew. Why? Because she did not have time to go by train. Mr. Acting Speaker, that is what is happening. There is a change. There is a rationalization of the travel within Canada. We are a country that is widespread, but I do think that we have to be very concerned about some of the remote areas. I think about the Town of Churchill. The only other alternative is airplane which is very expensive. As an individual, as a taxpayer, and as a supporter of Manitobans, I would support even subsidizing those areas that require it. I have no problem in doing that.

I do not want to see money wasted where we can make savings. That is the responsibility of us as legislators to put our dollars to the best use. We see the Liberals talk daily about backing the Brink's truck up and spending money on social programs. Those are good social programs, but we have to have the money for them. We have to have some—(interjection)—Pardon? That is right. They would just sign it and let it go, as the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) said, just sign it and send it out. We have to have some sort of accountability when we stand up in this House and we say what we want to do and what should be done. There better be accountability, honesty, and sincerity. I have not heard very much honesty and sincerity coming from Members opposite today.

I saw a discussion based on how can we take the provincial Tories over the actions of a federal Government. That was the thrust of the debate today. We should be in Estimates discussing the Estimates of Family Services. —(interjection)— Now the critic for Family Services (Ms. Gray) says, we do not get any answers in what she perceives—because she is not getting an answer that she wants, then she says, we are not. You still have that right to ask the question and put it on.

But, while we are wasting time debating the VIA Rail cuts, we are not debating Family Services which, to me, are the issues that we should be debating. They are issues that affect Manitobans, those people who are on welfare, the needy, and those who need health care systems, we should be discussing those issues. We are not discussing those important issues that are before us today.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I will wind up my few minutes here. I did not come intending to speak, but I just got so irate over the hypocrisy of Members opposite, the irresponsible attitude that they have taken today that I felt it was important to at least say a few words.

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): I just want to put a few words on the record. I will not take much time on

this debate. The railway has been one of the prime transportation used by Native people. We use the railways because it is one of the transporting companies that recognizes the Native people, the Treaty Indians, especially on their status card, they are given discounts. I do not know if many of the legislators realize that we get a 15 percent discount anywhere across Canada on the railway, so to speak, we do not leave our Treaty cards at home. We do not leave home without it, so we get a discount on our travels.

When I was very young, I had a very unfortunate experience with my first ride on a railway, when I was being sent by the Department of Indian Affairs to attend the residential school, hopefully to be educated, to be assimilated into white society. They put me on a train in a train station, dropped me off without a ticket and told me to get on a train at twelve o'clock. So I got on the train at twelve o'clock and the conductor came by and told me to get out, and that was sort of unfortunate, but I made it all the way to my destiny and partly to where I was going, and that was the kind of treatment we got when we were at that time being sent to the residential school. We did not have very many rights at that time.

I just wanted to say that the national railway was built by the Conservatives, by John Diefenbaker, a national dream which has been quoted in this Chamber as becoming a national nightmare in terms of how this Government has approached and disbanded the railway system. Certainly if you look at western industrialized countries like Japan or France or United States, they have expanded their national railway systems, and this is the route that has been taken by other countries. Certainly we see many of the people, especially in Manitoba, being concerned about the impact it is going to have, the loss of jobs, and where the transportation system will lead us in terms of providing that to our Canadian citizens. I may adjourn my remarks at this time; I believe somebody else wants to speak for a couple of minutes on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Acting Speaker, first of all I should thank the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) for giving me the opportunity to speak on this MUPI today. Unlike the Conservative Government, I do believe that this is of a crucial importance. It is important we debate it here today.

I believe, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the Government in Ottawa and the provincial Government are not giving VIA Rail an opportunity to survive. If we take a look at the rolling stock CN and CP had given to VIA in order to set up a truly national passenger train system, we would have found that in CN they had donated 888 pieces of conventional rolling stock, 205 of which were already overdue for retirement. We had 683 of those units that were to expire from services in 1980. CP had 187 pieces of rolling stock; in 1977 that stock was 20-years-old.

What we are finding here is that VIA Rail never really had a chance to prove itself. I believe that had the Liberal Government been able to continue on throughout the '80s, we would have seen the money

flowing to ensure we would have had a truly national passenger train service that went across from Vancouver to Prince Edward Island, Mr. Acting Speaker. I find it very unfortunate that this insensitive, uncaring Government in Ottawa is cutting it in the manner in which they are doing it today.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I do believe, after hearing the comments today from the Members of this Cabinet, that they too are of the opinion they too would like to see this particular cutback. I think if we take a look at what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was saying today, let the economy dictate, is the same uncaring attitude that the Conservatives in Ottawa have. I find it extremely shameful for this provincial Government not to stand up for Manitobans, to take it to the legal court process, to do whatever is necessary to ensure that Canada's best interest is being served.

They should not be so narrow-minded and closed-minded and not willing to pursue whatever avenue they can to ensure a national dream many of us have had. My family comes from Transcona, Mr. Acting Speaker,

and spent several generations there. A good portion of my family members have worked for the CN shops. My grandmother had a pass to travel anywhere where CN or VIA Rail travelled. Many seniors used VIA, and if you check with my grandmother, she will tell you there is nothing like travelling on the train to see what Canada is all about.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the Conservative Government is taking this opportunity away not only for the seniors of today; they are taking it away from seniors tomorrow. They are taking it away from generations in the future. I find this is uncaring and that the Government of Manitoba should not be treating it in such a trivial manner.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please. The hour being 10 p.m., the debate is terminated in accordance with Rule 21(4). This House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).