

I should like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that CMHC units are being offered for sale at market prices. In condominium projects where a large number of units have been acquired and cannot be sold individually on the open market at their target price, CMHC may obtain the consent of the condominium board and offer the units to investor-purchasers at prices which generally reflect home owner prices. The conditions of sale can, at times, reveal an apparent disparity between the price paid by an investor-purchaser and a tenant-purchaser, for example where an interest rate buy-down is involved.

The request for proposal technique is directed toward qualified bidders interested in purchasing CMHC's real estate for rental-investment purposes. This process allows potential purchasers more flexibility as to the terms and conditions than the traditional tendering process. This procedure has proved to be a flexible and effective marketing approach in the attainment of CMHC's objective of disposing of some of its real estate portfolio directly to the open market. It offers no special favours to the private sector and obtains the best price and associated conditions for each property, taking into account the current and near future market conditions at the time of sale. Where CMHC anticipates that the purchaser may resell, the agreement for sale may provide, among other conditions, that CMHC will share in the profit ultimately realized by the speculator-purchaser on such resale.

VIA RAIL—EFFECT OF CUTBACKS ON WESTERN ECONOMY

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Mr. Speaker, on October 26 I directed a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy). I pointed out:

As chairman of the Western Development Committee, and as one who is supposed to be stimulating economic growth in the west, he will know that the unilateral cutbacks in the VIA Rail routes will have a devastating effect on the western economy in general and cause the Canadian tourist industry losses in the millions. Also, there will be lay-offs in the rail and tourism industry.

The minister replied that a major Air Canada facility has been moved to Manitoba. He concluded by saying:

—which will be of substantial help to the hon. member's constituency. We are trying to promote industries in western Canada which are modern, up to date, and high technology industries, and not to support obsolescence.

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The Minister of Employment and Immigration is supposed to be stimulating employment, not reducing it, as the VIA Rail cuts will do. Between 8,000 and 16,000 jobs will be lost across Canada, and 500 will be lost in Winnipeg alone. How many hundreds will be lost in related sectors? The Winnipeg local of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Transport and General Workers Union has lost 167.

The minister stated that it is all right to cut VIA Rail back because we now have a new Air Canada overhaul hangar in Winnipeg. The minister is giving us nothing. The Liberal Party is giving us absolutely nothing. All the government is doing is returning a small portion of something that should never have been taken away in the first place.

Adjournment Debate

I want to read from a letter I received from the Winnipeg-Farlane Camping and Recreation Association, which is a group of Winnipeggers who travel by VIA Rail from Winnipeg to the Sioux Lookout area. The association points out the following:

We have recently received figures on the performance of Trains 144 and 145, which show that over the past three months a total of 4,368 passengers were carried. This amounts to a load factor of over 120 per cent either arriving or departing at or from Winnipeg.

This is not obsolescence, yet the government is going to cut back on VIA Rail. What are these people supposed to do, take JetStars down to their camps? They have no other way to get down there except by VIA Rail. It is all very well for Liberal cabinet ministers to fly around in JetStars and for two of them to go to the same city at the same time.

This camping association also said this:

What more can VIA ask for in the line of performance? As it is, at least 20 per cent of the passengers on most runs have to stand in the baggage car and/or wait for next week's train.

The Liberals want to cut this back, and there is 120 per cent occupancy.

The western tourism industry and economy in general will lose millions of dollars and will be forced to lay off hundreds of workers because of the cutbacks. Jasper will be hard hit, since trains are the main method of getting into the town. Cuts will also hurt many Manitoba towns such as Rivers, Thompson, Thicket Portage, and numerous other small communities.

Recently there was a letter in the *Winnipeg Free Press* from a travel agent in Florida in which he pointed out:

Our travel agency sends more Americans to travel by Canada's scenic railroad routes than for any other reason.

We will lose tourist dollars because of the VIA Rail cutbacks. Tourists do not spend money just on the railroad. They spend it in hotels, restaurants, buying souvenirs and so forth. We will lose all this business.

What about the 500,000 acrophobiacs, those who fear heights? They have no way to travel or they will have to find other methods of travel because they cannot travel by aircraft. It is all right for Liberal ministers to fly around in JetStars, but these people, 500,000 of them, will have their VIA Rail travel cut back. No consideration will be given to those people by the Liberal government.

The government is supposed to be cutting back in order to save money. It is all right to save by cutting back VIA Rail, but there will be not cutbacks on Liberal ministers' flying around in JetStars. They can fly anywhere they like. They can fly to Liberal fund raising dinners—two to the same location—and to hell with the Canadian people.

This is just another example of why western Canada feels alienated. Western Canadians are not permitted an input into the decision-making process. Indeed, in the case of the VIA Rail cutbacks no one was. The Conservative VIA Rail task force allowed Canadians to have some input. This is what the Minister of Employment and Immigration should have been fighting for. He should have been fighting for full-scale hear-