

Railways

and the government are here; so money should have been available to those who wanted to carry out that project.

[*English*]

Mr. Blaker: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—I am incorrectly advised. I apologize.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. The hon. member for Hull has the floor.

Mr. Isabelle: Mr. Speaker, this is a false alarm. As I said, the Canadian government, through its agencies, should have made money available to the promoters of rapid transit between downtown Hull and Ottawa. I remember at the time a number of experts, even international ones, came to the area to brief me on the development of such a system. The proposal was to use former CNR and CPR tracks, since they were already available, would entail no expropriation, but rather would allow experimenting on a new transit system. I am referring to the *Safège* system, the overhead monorail operating somewhat like an inverted Hovercraft. It is protected from the elements, very fast, very light and can move thousands of people every day for the cost of a single nickel or dime. But I cannot understand as I said that in an area like Canada's National Capital, the heart and soul of the whole Canadian nation, a few cents cannot be spent on experiments in public transit. Certainly, in Ottawa and Hull, the downtown areas in both cases are ideally suited for that type of transport. Indeed, mention was made of that possibility, back in 1968 I believe, but apparently no one in the Department of Transport did anything about it. I do not remember who was there at the time, all I know is that the suggestion was dropped. So I would like once more to commend the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson) for putting forward this bill to provide for the establishment of a commission to preserve abandoned railway lines in Canada. I feel they could be used in Canadian towns to

do what I just referred to, rapid transit for medium to high density urban centres.

Mr. Prosper Boulanger (Mercier): Mr. Speaker, I regret I have only a few minutes left to speak to such an important bill, namely Bill C-221 introduced by my distinguished and hon. colleague for Laprairie who, in the process of drafting this bill, must certainly have carried out very extensive research and studies in order to come up with such a well substantiated and well explained bill. This is what leads me to draw your attention to the explanatory note.

Mr. Speaker, it is said that there is an increasing awareness in Canada of the potential for rapid transit or recreational use of abandoned railway lines or unused railway rights-of-way. As a matter of fact, in Montreal a few weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, we attended a meeting of the mayors of the municipalities of the Montreal area and the president of that organization, Mayor Jean Corbeil of the city of Anjou, was referring to the serious problems of public transportation and in particular railway transportation on the north and south shore into and out of Montreal, and also between Mirabel and Montreal. At that time, I recall the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lalonde) said that we had over \$60 million set aside for the Montreal island municipalities to be used for upgrading the public transportation system. So the issue is not then the removal of rails but rather the improvement of the service, of the cars and transportation in general so that the fares will be lower. We had agreed, that is to say the government in the person of the Minister of Justice, to contribute up to an amount of—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. The hour provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired. It being five o'clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday next, at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 2(1).

At 5 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.