

*Adjournment Debate*CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY—ABANDONMENT OF CERTAIN  
DAILY SUPPLEMENTARY SERVICE

**Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval):** Mr. Speaker, on September 22 last, CP Rail advised passengers on the Farnham-Montreal, Sainte-Thérèse, Laval and Montreal line that it will abandon its commuter train service—which has been operated for generations—due to an increased deficit during the past years.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of the decision taken by the board of directors, some people and passengers advised me that CP Rail was going to give up its commuter train service. On October 17 last, I pointed out to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) the importance of that service and especially that decision which seemed to be quite unexpected, considering that they gave only a month's notice before dropping that service. I mentioned that I was aware of the fact that it was a commuter train service and that it also rests with the province of Quebec and the municipalities involved to provide service to commuters.

The minister replied that he had met his provincial colleague and as a result of negotiations with a view to assisting in the upgrading of Montreal's rail transport equipment they had come to an agreement in principle. And the minister concluded:

—this agreement should be finalized in the days ahead. However, there is one important thing to remember, although the agreement will provide for a substantial federal contribution to this upgrading program—

It therefore seems quite obvious to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Canadian government is prepared to share the cost of overhauling the equipment, that this is a provincial decision and that, according to the press release issued September 22, CP Rail will abandon two lines, Sainte-Thérèse, Laval and Montreal, Farnham and Montreal, without this affecting the Lakeshore service between Montreal and Rigaud. Also, at the end of 1979, the Quebec government made public a general plan to merge this service with the metropolitan urban transport system rearranged by the Montreal Urban Community Transit Commission. So as far as the Lakeshore service is concerned, the province agreed to intervene immediately and CP Rail agreed to continue its service. Why is there a double standard? My question is the following: Does CP Rail not have a moral obligation towards the users of these commuter trains, is it possible to abandon in this way a service with less than a month's notice, and if the service is abandoned, does this not mean a lengthy delay before the service is provided again probably by the provincial authorities? But if service is abandoned on October 26, then there is nothing much we can do and nobody knows how long that can last.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I am of the opinion that CP Rail should maintain this service in operation and extend the October 26 deadline until such time as the province would agree to integrate this transportation network in the greater Montreal urban network, as it did for the Rigaud-Lakeshore service.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that, as the minister said in reply to my question last Friday, October 17, a substantial amount will be provided to the province to renew commuter train services equipment. If CP Rail still has an accumulated deficit during the integration period of this service, I ask the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) to hold back the amount which will be provided to the province to pay the deficit accumulated by CP Rail so that the users of the Sainte-Thérèse, Laval and Montreal, and of the Farnham and Montreal services may continue to use this public service in view of the high cost of energy and the need to reduce the number of cars in the Montreal area. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, as a last resort, I urge the minister to examine these two possibilities, that is, to extend the service after October 26 until the agreement has been signed and implemented by the province of Quebec, or else, to hold back the amounts which will be provided to CP Rail for the deficit accumulated during the period of extension of this service. We cannot accept a double standard in this case, Mr. Speaker. Since the province of Quebec agreed in 1979 to maintain commuter trains to Rigaud and Lakeshore, the same policies and the same principles must apply to the service I have mentioned. I therefore ask the minister to consider these two possibilities, and I believe that the parliamentary secretary has already been informed of my representations in this regard. It is not the first time that I have raised the issue of urban transportation in the Montreal area. There is an integrated transportation network, and this is a concern for me and a priority for the users.

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**Mr. Robert Bockstael (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has raised a problem which was discussed a month ago by the federal and provincial transport ministers, that of the daily commuter train services. First of all, it should be noted that passenger service is considered as coming under federal jurisdiction, while commuter trains come under provincial jurisdiction. In the case of Sainte-Thérèse, the service has never been designated as a passenger service by the Canadian Transport Commission, whose responsibility it is to make such a ruling. In the case of Farnham, the hon. member is certainly aware of the recent decision of the CTC to the effect that the service could no longer be considered a passenger service. As the jurisdiction in this regard is well defined, it is up to the province and the urban municipality to determine the level of daily services in the area. In September, Mr. Speaker, the provinces notified CP Rail that its two services would not be included in the comprehensive regional commuter train network. Because of its substantial losses and the very small number of passengers, CP Rail decided to abandon both services.

To conclude, I must say that the federal-provincial agreement mentioned by the minister in his reply last Friday concerns a contribution to the modernization of the equipment in the over-all federal aid program to urban transport. The