

difficult to do but he has agreed; I met with him this morning—to send a representative there. There will be representatives from almost every community and every chamber of commerce along the Kamloops–Calgary corridor including Banff, Golden, Field, Invermere, Revelstoke, and other points in between.

We hope that we can establish a case, but with what is happening within the VIA Rail structure right now, as it is already beginning to come apart at the seams, we need time. I am sure there are other communities across Canada with as valid reasons as we have that also need time to marshal the facts of their own cases and time to persuade the minister or the department of the validity of their claims, even given what we may believe are the incorrect assumptions of the government as to the reasons for shutting down major parts of the whole system.

The traffic volumes and cost recovery are comparatively speaking much worse in those areas than, for instance, from Jasper to Prince Rupert, which is being given three days a week of service under the remote configurations which the minister has laid out.

We have particular problems in the communities of Field and Revelstoke. Revelstokians have to drive at least 200 kilometres to get to the nearest commercial airport. They and the people of Golden and Field also live in an area which is now to be deprived of all commercial rail passenger service. This area has its highways totally cut off more often due to heavy snow fall and avalanche closures than any other part of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, coming from the part of the country that you come from, I am sure you are aware of that. I do not think there is anyone from western Canada who cares for travel at all who has not on a number of occasions travelled that corridor between Kamloops and Calgary and perhaps to Vancouver.

The government is suggesting that it is going to keep the Rocky Mountaineer because it is good for tourism. That is good. We have hundreds of millions of dollars in offshore investment right now riding on the necessity of improved transportation between Banff and Revelstoke and Kamloops and Calgary. If this is closed before we get proper airport facilities, before we get double laning and better snow shedding along the Trans–Canada Highway,

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we are going to lose the potential of building up a major tourist industry in the Revelstoke area that coupled with Banff can provide a major economic boost to an area which otherwise has been very depressed by the resource depression of a few years ago and the timber supply problems we are having in British Columbia.

The minister appears to have an open ear on this particular case, but it is not enough. There are not only our communities but hundreds of communities, I am sure, all across Canada that rightly or wrongly feel that they even within the departments's own guidelines can establish a proper case.

They do need time to prepare their cases, to make their cases, to attempt to convince the government. I would hope that there is yielding to emotions such as we have had or to the spirit at least of the motion that the Official Opposition has put before us today and that a moratorium is put on. It does not specify a time period, so even the passage of this motion would not bind the government to a particular number of hundreds of millions of dollars in subsidies over a particular period to provide some time at the minister's or government's discretion so that we can make our cases and attempt to make the best of what we think is the bad deal imposed right across Canada by these arbitrary cuts to the VIA Rail system.

I am thankful for the very timely opportunity to be able make some of these arguments today. I hope the officials who will be attending for the Minister of Transport in Golden on November 16 will get an earful and will decide that they have heard the facts. In addition to having some of the best freight rail service in Canada justified by the expenditures of almost \$500 million during the last few years to give us the longest tunnel in the Commonwealth to carry freight, we can also utilize those new facilities to carry passengers both ways on what is, without a doubt, one of the most beautiful areas of this country.

If we are willing to expend money either through a public rail system or through privatized local branches for tourism, is it not also proper and can we not also make a case that we ought to spend some money on behalf of serving Canadians, especially in those areas where they do not have effective choices as to their modes of transportation, at least until such time as we