

Adjournment Debate

In conclusion, it is clear to all members of this House how important the question of the environment has become. Any good corporate citizen will ensure that their projects are submitted to the most extensive review necessary and possible. It is in that way that those captains of industry or the guy who owns the little trucking firm knows and understands the rules. That is what a legislative assessment review process will do.

I urge the government, in light of the possibility that this motion will pass, to move faster than it is moving now. It scares me that this bill is sitting in the department somewhere. Let us get on with it and introduce the legislation now so we can have some adequate environmental assessment review process in Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion, as amended?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I see that most hon. members who are scheduled to participate in the adjournment debate are present.

Would it be agreeable to the House that the chair would call it six o'clock?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38(1) deemed to have been moved.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Madam Speaker, on October 6 of this year I posed a

question to the Minister of Transport with particular reference to the impending closures since the government's VIA Rail announcements.

• (1750)

It announced the impending closure of The Canadian line of VIA Rail, particularly between Kamloops, British Columbia, and Calgary, Alberta.

If you look at the government's own statistics on the usage of that railway, at least those that we in the opposition have access to, it clearly shows that The Canadian line, although it is not broken down in which portions of the line, at least that information has not been made readily available to us, in virtually all statistical breakdowns has a higher rate of cost recovery of passenger usage and with all other yardsticks is a higher performer and a better economic performer with a higher degree of use than virtually any other segment of the VIA Rail system, system excluding those lines within the Golden Horseshoe and the Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto corridor.

In spite of this the government saw fit to classify for special designation the VIA Rail line from Jasper through to Prince George to Prince Rupert, even though on all of the various categories of passenger and economic performance it is a worse performer than The Canadian line that runs through southern Alberta and southern British Columbia.

We do not want to deny the citizens of the north three-day-a-week service or basic essential service in terms of passenger rail. If the government's argument is economic as it suggests that it is, we think it ought to have paid a little more attention to the actual economic yardsticks which government and VIA Rail statistics show to be the case. The southern line, The Canadian line, is less of a drain on the budget and on the economy than the northern line which has been kept in operation on a three-day-a-week basis while there is to be no service other than the Rocky Mountaineer during the two or three key tourist summer months.

Often people in government think, whether it is this government or another government, that simply because an area is in the north the communities there must be remote. In this case, especially on The Canadian line between the cities of Kamloops and Calgary, there are no airports between those two points. Avalanches and