

*Statements by Ministers*

It would seem to me that it is a major investment question and goes back to an area in which the Government does have some control. We know that Air Canada is facing a major problem of capitalization. We know that CNR is facing the same problem. Until those capitalization problems are solved and an answer found, their ability to respond to safety problems which are caused by deregulation will be hindered and handicapped. Therefore, until the Government addresses the question clearly—and I would hope there would be an answer—as to how the Government will ensure a proper financial base for our major carriers, especially those in the public domain, some of the safety problems will not be addressed.

I could go at some length, but unfortunately it comes back to matters of money. It comes back to a question of who pays and from where will the money come. We welcome the \$60 million for airport security. There is no doubt about that. However, we know the problem is much larger and must, over the next four or five years, be addressed. The longer we put off addressing the problem, the more likelihood of serious accidents taking place. I am not here to provide warning or to scaremonger. I am simply saying it is a matter of reality which I think all Hon. Members of the House should share, and it is our job to bring that reality and that warning to bear.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans).

**An Hon. Member:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that round of applause.

● (1230)

I want to begin by saying that, like the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy), I am pinch-hitting. I do not pretend for one moment to have the knowledge to be able to give the Minister the answers to all of the problems. However, I do want to say something to him through you, Mr. Speaker.

On this side of the House the Minister enjoys a great deal of respect for the effort which he puts in. I say that on behalf of my colleagues. I know that our transport critic would have wanted to say that in any event. No one doubts his sincerity when he comes forward to make a statement such as the one he made today. However, we do have some concerns that I will express.

I do not think there is anyone in the country who does not share the Minister's sincere desire to increase the standards of safety. At one time or other we have all experienced or come into contact with people who have experienced problems with safety in all aspects of transportation. Again, I do not doubt that the Minister is committed to improving the safety standards in transportation. However, I think it would be appropriate at some later date for the Minister to make another statement, perhaps outlining more clearly some of the new technology which is being used by the various carriers

which operate within the transportation system. I think it would be helpful for all of us if we could get a firm grip on the degree to which carriers within the transportation system are in fact modernizing with an eye to a safer system and what constitutes that modernization effort.

In his statement the Minister assured us again, as he has done in the past, that safety will not be compromised as a result of economic deregulation. To the extent that one can be successful as a result of making such a statement, and by repeating it over and over again, the Minister is at least meeting with some degree of success in getting other people to take it up as the battle-cry. He may be aware of the situation which I am told existed in the Transport Committee when it was examining the document entitled "Freedom to Move" produced by and for the Minister. Apparently when either a member of the Opposition or a member of the public raised the potential dangers of economic deregulation in terms of safety, I am told it was not unusual for members of the government side to respond by saying: "The Minister assures us that there will be no detrimental impact on safety as a result of economic deregulation". That was said without any analysis, without any background being presented. It was said as an article of faith. Because the Minister says it then it must be so. I hope he is right. I think most Hon. Members hope that he is right. I cannot afford, if the Minister will allow, simply to take that as an article of faith. I cannot simply accept, because the Minister says that things will be improved from a safety point of view and will not be detrimentally affected by the economic effects of deregulation, that that is necessarily so. I make that point to the Minister in conjunction with my earlier request that he consider making another statement at another time, perhaps in the fall, with respect to the whole question.

I also wish to suggest to the Minister that when the committee of the House examines the new national transportation legislation, that he place a political emphasis on the need to ensure that the safety aspects of the changes which will result will be paramount in the minds of the government Members of the committee. They must understand that the Minister is requesting them to make that a priority in their considerations. They must require the carriers who may well appear before them to make representations to present their programs for improved safety as they make their arguments for or against the deregulation process which is being suggested. Of course, this is something the Minister can suggest to Government Members who sit on the committee. We will obviously do the same for our own Members. In our opinion it would be tantamount to neglect if that is not done. I think the Minister would want that done, just as we want it done. However, it might be overlooked, as I think it was overlooked in the considerations leading up to the "Freedom to Move" document, if the Minister does not make it clear that he wants it to be a priority. So I would ask him to do that.