

especially the CPR, when they threaten to withhold service or investment. Ordinarily, we think of a regulator as regulating the utility. In this case, however, we have a history of the CPR using its monopoly privileges as a utility to regulate its regulator. We see the CPR using its monopoly privileges given to it by the taxpayer to regulate Government policy and abuse the monopoly. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) tells farmers they cannot have a modern transport system unless the CPR gets its way. Blackmail is another word for what is going on, Mr. Speaker. What we are witnessing here today is the capitulation of the Liberal Government to the economic blackmail which has been practised on this country by the CPR for so many years.

We also have the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) telling railway workers they cannot have jobs unless the CPR gets its way. The railway workers are the decoy of the Government's transport plans because there are going to be fewer jobs with the Government's plan than there are today with the Crow rate. After all the concessions made by the Government, the railways are actually going to invest 22 per cent less in 1983 than they did in 1981 when supposedly they lost hundreds of millions of dollars on the Crow. Less investment means fewer jobs, and the refusal, for instance, of the CNR to cancel its system-wide lay-offs on May 1, after this proposal had already been made, when they had earlier allowed wishful thinking people to believe that changes in the Crow would make a difference, is another good example of how the railways have misled the country.

The NDP alternative to the plan which we have before us will create hundreds of thousands of jobs, upgrading railways, while keeping the Crow rate for farmers. It will not cost the taxpayers any more than what we have before us but will create more jobs because, unlike the Government's proposal, our plan would prevent public money from leaking out of the rail system to dividends or real estate or whatever else the railways decide they want to invest in other than the transportation of grain and other than meeting their commitments to the Canadian people and the Canadian economy.

Mr. Gustafson: Just leave the country, period.

Mr. Blaikie: We want a new deal with the railway companies. Instead of continuing with straight handouts, as the Liberals propose, we want to pay the railways only for their actual losses hauling grain. Public money invested in the rail system for expansion and upgrading will give us equity shares in CP Limited, and increase our involvement in Canadian National. Not only would we own what we pay for, but we would also control the companies so we can direct them to operate in the social and economic interests of Canada.

If we were to take equity in CP—what this plan proposes to give that corporation for nothing—we would become the biggest single shareholder by 1985 and our share would grow by \$275 million each year. This would bring CP Limited under social ownership and control and would not cost any more than what the Government proposes to spend already. Instead, we are to pay for the CPR one more time without getting anything in return.

Western Grain Transportation Act

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to be the first to admit that public ownership does not necessarily mean a company will have a social conscience or act necessarily in the interests of the Canadian economy. We own 100 per cent of CN, and yet often it operates no differently from the CP Railway. So in socializing the CPR we will need a way to make the public system different so it does not adopt the commercial values incompatible with serving the interests of the Canadian economy and the Canadian people. Crown corporations have a responsibility to be alternative and superior forms of economic development, which take into account the social, environmental and other dimensions which need to be considered if economic development is to be fully human development.

We hope people will support our alternative, Mr. Speaker. We will show people that this is not the only option and that what the Government has put before us is inevitable. We will suggest that there are other ways of improving our transportation system which does not involve all the risks and social and economic destruction associated with changing the Crow rate. We are the only Party offering a plan to keep the Crow and create jobs in upgrading the railways. The Conservatives oppose so far, it appears to me, at least, the plan which has been put before us by the Government, but we do not really know what that Party would rather have. The Conservatives say they would keep the benefit of the Crow rate, but they do not want to keep the Crow rate. There is no unanimity there about keeping the present statutory Crowsnest Pass rate as it is. I defy anyone to demonstrate to me that there is that kind of unanimity, because there is not. The reason that is so, Mr. Speaker, is because the two Parties had similar things in mind. If the Conservative Party had survived December 13, 1979, it would have been bringing in a plan somewhat like we see before us. It was the Conservatives who, on November 7, 1979, said their Government was going to open up the Crow. It was the Conservatives who appointed the present Deputy Minister of Transport, who is the chief engineer of what we have before us.

● (1700)

Here we see, Mr. Speaker, the same hypocrisy we witnessed on the Via Rail cutbacks. We see the Tories opposing and making a big stink out of what we all know they would have done themselves had they been allowed to remain in power in 1979. One of these days, Mr. Speaker, the Tories are going to have to pick sides. I was interested in what the Hon. Member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski) said earlier. He said, "You are going to have to pick sides. Which side are you on, the side of the unions or on the side of the farmers?" He totally misunderstood the real conflict in this debate. The Tories are going to have to decide whether they support the farmers or the CPR; the farmers or Cargill; the Crow rate or the Liberals. That is the decision which the Conservative Party faces now. Time is running out. This is the time now for decision on the part of the Progressive Conservative Party, and soon they will have to face up to the inherent conflict between the economic