

*Adjournment Debate*

the Canadian Wheat Board target. I would ask the minister to examine the targets being set by the Wheat Board.

Mr. Speaker, my final point is that the morale of the people operating the railways must be at rock bottom level now when they hear the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) say what a mess the system is in.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Marceau (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, the problems raised by grain transport in western Canada have been existing for several months, as you all know, and were on the verge of causing a major crisis.

After the settlement of the national railway crisis last year, the railway companies have neglected to make available in the Prairies enough cars to relieve the congestion.

[*English*]

By the time the railways agreed to a realistic number of grain cars, severe winter conditions settled in on the prairies, compounding the problems. The federal government set up an emergency committee some time ago in an effort to get all segments of the industry working together

in co-operation to move the maximum amount of grain. Following the work of this committee, all parts of the industry, including the railways, have now agreed to join action on several points. For now and for perhaps some weeks a number of branch rail lines which have been seriously affected by heavy snow and are all but inoperable will be closed to allow the full resources of the transportation system to move as much grain as possible on the main lines. The railways and the grain handling companies will co-operate in assembling unit trains. In addition, a special committee chaired by the Canadian Wheat Board is being struck to consider changes to give farmers at closed delivery points additional ways to get grain to lines that are accessible.

[*Translation*]

The government is aware of its responsibilities in this field and is firmly determined to keep on fulfilling them, but we hope to get the co-operation of the hon. member and his party, as it is in the interest of a great many Canadians. I shall read my hon. friend's statement again and if it contains acceptable suggestions, you may be sure that we will not fail to take them into consideration.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10:28 p.m.