

seriously affected by this agreement, with a net cost to the Atlantic provinces of some \$200 million.

Given the fact that such an interim agreement will not be brought before the House of Commons, and given the need to persuade the Government to reconsider this agreement before it is finalized, I believe an emergency debate is required now.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the Hon. Member for Oshawa for bringing this matter to the attention of the Chair. The Chair is of the opinion that it is a serious matter of national significance and, under the circumstances, the Chair is prepared to agree that there ought to be an emergency debate under Standing Order 29 on the subject raised by the Hon. Member for Oshawa.

Does the Hon. Member have leave to move the adjournment of the House under Standing Order 29 for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair takes it that there is unanimous agreement in the chamber?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: It is my obligation to advise all Hon. Members that the emergency debate will commence at eight o'clock this evening.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION ACT, 1986

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed from Tuesday, January 27, consideration of the motion of Mr. Crosbie that Bill C-18, an Act respecting national transportation, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee, and the amendment of Mr. Benjamin (p.2756).

Mr. Speaker: Before recognizing the Hon. Member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Gray), I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement today, this day's sitting will be extended beyond 6 p.m. by 17 minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Darryl L. Gray (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine): Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon when I commented on Bill C-18 respecting changes to Canada's transport regulations, I emphasized the fact that the situation in 1987 is not the same as it was 20 years ago, that things have changed. The situation has changed at home, Mr. Speaker, in the United States, in Europe, in Asia—deep changes have been made in market structures and those changes already have an impact here in Canada.

National Transportation Act, 1986

I asked many questions yesterday afternoon, and I will ask another one: In your view, Mr. Speaker, who has been and will remain the best analyst, the best judge, the one person who is best placed to adjust rapidly and efficiently to market changes? I sincerely believe that the best judge, the best analyst is the producer himself, the entrepreneur who must set his prices on the basis of his various costs with respect to manufacturing, delivery, the cost of materials, labour, and taxation. The question therefore is this: are we going to live at all costs within a regulatory framework that is rigid, constraining, outlandish, inadjusted, outmoded and regressive? My submission is: No, Mr. Speaker.

Three vital elements are of concern to me in this matter—the true public interest, absolute security, and the assurance that Canadian businesses from now on will have every opportunity to take their rightful place on the labour market, in the regional transportation market, in national and international transportation.

• (1530)

[English]

It has often been said, in terms of Bill C-18, that safety is a very serious and honest question in the minds of the public. It has been stated by the former Minister of Transport and our present Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) that safety will not be compromised. We have worked in the past, and will continue to work in the future so that safety will not be an issue. Canadians should today and in the future enjoy the peace of mind which comes from knowing that Canadian transportation is one of the safest in the world. We are continually striving to improve our safety programs. Suggestions that the National Transportation Act will jeopardize safety are completely without foundation.

The Government's commitment to safety is also evident in a variety of initiatives with respect to each mode of transportation. For example, in 1985 the Aeronautics Act was amended and strengthened in many respects. The Canada Shipping Act amendments which will improve marine safety will be brought back before the House. A uniform National Safety Code for trucking was approved by federal and provincial Governments in October and a new Railway Safety Act is being developed. Other safety initiatives in the transportation of dangerous goods, in highway programs and in accident investigation are being introduced.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, we, as Canadians, are generally an informed, mature, competent nation that is quite capable of deciding by itself what service is best capable of satisfying our needs based on the quality/price ratio, especially in the area of goods and passengers transportation. I find it outdated that in a free country that is highly civilized, technologically well advanced, we should live with a transportation policy that does not serve the interests of passengers, suppliers of goods and services, producers and consumers. Consistent of course with the most basic standards of safety and good social conduct, we