

*Adjournment Debate*

We will be spending an additional \$350 million on training under Section 26 of the Unemployment Insurance Act. This represents a doubling of the current allocation for training under the UI program, thereby giving 60,000 more UI claimants the skills necessary for re-employment.

In addition, we will be undertaking a major reorientation of the national employment service to offer additional help to the unemployed in finding jobs. We will be earmarking \$100 million to assist the displaced workers who are experiencing difficulties in finding other jobs.

Self-employment and entrepreneurship programs in other countries have shown promise as elements in the active program strategies to encourage self-sufficiency. In light of this, the government is committing \$50 million to allow unemployment insurance claimants with viable business plans to capitalize their UI benefits to partially defray business start-up cost.

We are revising the current program regime of sickness and maternity benefits. The changes we are making in this area represent a breakthrough for Canadian social policy. Our proposals for change will enhance the protection that is currently available by making the receipt of these benefits more flexible and by providing 10 weeks of parental benefits.

We are extending UI coverage to workers age 65 or over. This will substantially increase the income security available to these workers.

• (1820 )

Last, Madam Speaker, we will amend the Unemployment Insurance Act to eliminate restrictions on access to benefits during labour disputes.

TRANSPORT-SUBSIDIES TO VIA RAIL/CUTS TO VIA RAIL/ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF RAIL TRANSIT

**Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise tonight as part of the adjournment debate to talk a bit more about VIA Rail.

I want to say at the outset that we have all been waiting for the other shoe to drop. We have had the leaks, we have had the first shoe, but now it would appear that the government is busy changing shoes. The parliamentary assistant is looking at me with a queried look on his face.

What they are doing is rewriting the report right at this minute. They are taking routes that the leaked document said were going to be cut and, lo and behold, they are being saved. On the other hand, they are taking routes and services that supposedly were saved in the leaked documents and now they are going to be cut. What a way to run, or should I say ruin, a railroad.

What does this action of rewriting reports at the last minute just to protect the political backside of the Minister of Transport say about this government's ability to make decisions? It should not matter if the contents of the documents leak out. If they have been thoughtfully done, if the analysis has been done, if the environmental assessment has been done, if everything has been checked and double checked, then they should not worry about having to rewrite the document.

They should be able to stand the tests. They should be able to withstand the test of the opposition. They should be able to withstand the test of the government backbenchers on the transport committee who will review whatever documents are produced, and they should be able to withstand the test of the people of Canada if they have been arrived at after the appropriate deliberation and analysis.

But I ask you, Madam Speaker, does this suggest that they are now writing an environmental assessment report so that the appropriate documents can be included with the package whenever it is released tomorrow or Thursday, or are they just rewriting the environmental assessment that they have done, if they have done one? There is no clear indication whatsoever that such a document has been produced or even considered.

This is not the way for any government to make decisions. This is not the way for a government to determine transportation policy for a country as diverse and as large as Canada. This is not the way to make decisions that have a profound impact on the environment, not just of this country but of this planet. This is certainly not the way to make decisions that will ultimately decimate the regions of this country; Atlantic Canada, northern Ontario, the prairies and British Columbia.

When Canadians learn the specifics, whatever the final result of this rewriting is, whether it is at 11 o'clock tomorrow morning outside the Conservative caucus room or in the press theatre—and I understand that Mr. Lawless and Mr. Hanigan are *en route* to Ottawa to help participate with the minister in telling Canadians the news—I hope that they do two things.