

Adjournment Debate

happening. It is the railway workers and the farmers who are going to pay the bill for the changes which were made.”

I look around and see what the Government's priorities really are when it comes to the railways and who benefits, Mr. Speaker. Almost every day I see the former President of the CPR, who in recent years until he retired earned a salary of \$500,000 a year or more. I see him almost every day because he got what the Government considered to be his just reward. He was appointed to the Senate. On the other hand we see what the Minister and the Government think is important for the employees of the CPR. Four thousand of them will be looking for other work. The Minister is not even ready to arrange for a joint meeting between himself, the company and the unions.

● (1730)

I urge the Minister to think about the people who are going to lose their jobs. I urge the Minister to take at least the first step and arrange for a meeting between himself, the company, and the unions to discuss what is likely to happen and what can be done to cushion the shock and to protect, at least in part, the workers of the CPR who are going to be laid off, many of whom have worked for that company for many years.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Éva Côté (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question put by my

hon. friend from the New Democratic Party, I can say that the CPR, like any other transport company, must remain competitive and offer quality service and competitive prices to Canadian customers. When transport companies modernize their equipment and improve their productivity, both the economy and the Canadian public stand to benefit.

However, the Minister is very concerned about the effects that introducing new technology and modernizing operations will have on hiring procedures and employment levels. It is a subject that is of particular interest to him, and that is why the Minister has already met with union representatives of CPR employees in Winnipeg and is planning to meet them again. He has indicated to this group that he intends to examine the responsibilities of the CPR under the Western Grain Transportation Act, with respect to their hiring programs and policies.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) also intends to meet with CPR management. I earnestly hope that my hon. friend will agree that both the Minister and the CPR are determined to maintain as many jobs as possible, considering these developments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): It being 5:33 p.m., in accordance with the order adopted on Thursday, May 10, 1984, the House stands adjourned until Monday, June 18, 1984, at eleven o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 2(1).

The House adjourned at 5.33 p.m.