

Adjournment Debate

VIA RAIL

sector, and their discussions have led to a number of innovations in housing.

Under the Canadian co-operative housing program established in 1986, we supported the development of a new mortgage financing called indexed-linked mortgage, a totally new program.

Mr. Speaker, I see that my time is running out and I know you are preparing to interrupt me soon, so I will get away from my text to refer to examples of co-operative projects and a speech I made last week, when I had an opportunity to attend the opening of the Marguerite Belley co-operative project in my constituency. A wide range of people were there, both the well-to-do and the poor. I told them of the quality of housing they were enjoying, because in our cities we can see the difference between projects supported by our Government and those from the private sector, in terms of the quality of existing buildings. I believe this is important because what can be more pleasant in life than living in quality housing, feeling good, being able to live decently. This is a benefit we are providing our people with the co-operative housing program. There are other initiatives we are taking in housing.

• (1800)

And look at what is also coming on stream in respect of senior citizen housing. Things are moving fast in that area.

I see you want to interrupt me, Mr. Speaker, but I believe our co-operative housing program is excellent and we must indeed go on directing funds to better housing in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The period provided for the consideration of private member business has now expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate tonight on a question that I put to the Minister of Transport on October 6. It was an important question I think because it followed on the deliberate slashing and destroying of the VIA Rail passenger network system in Canada by some 50 per cent.

What I want to do tonight is to discuss briefly some of the points around the VIA Rail remote services that we have in this country and what they mean in particular to the VIA Rail service in northern British Columbia through my riding.

Briefly, the government has done the wrong thing. I think our transport critic, the member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan, has done an excellent job in proving how wrong the Conservative government is to destroy VIA Rail as it is doing. As well, we have to look back in time a bit to recall how the Liberals did the same. It is unfortunate that in an inadequate way the Liberal Party when it was in government created VIA Rail. It made cuts to VIA. Now we see the absolute betrayal by the Conservative government of its election promises in 1984 and 1988.

It is important to review what the minister has said about remote services, most specifically the VIA Rail run from Prince Rupert to Jasper which goes through the riding of my good friend, the member for Skeena, as well as through my riding of Prince George—Bulkley Valley and the riding of my colleague, the member for Prince George—Peace River.

The question we put was to the transport minister. It was in light of the fact that he announced that in keeping this run going the three times a week that it does now, Transport Canada would be reviewing the transportation needs of the truly isolated communities along these remote routes to determine whether more cost-effective means of access could be introduced.

For the information of the House, we have not seen the VIA Rail timetable yet. Some of the communities served by this run are Harvey, Dunster, McBride, Goat River, Dome Creek, Penny, Longworth, Dago, Burns Lake, Houston and Telkwa. Many of those communities depend on VIA Rail as their only means of transportation.