

*Adjournment Debate*

charge of running VIA Rail, how can his responsibility be increased? They were both in charge of VIA Rail.

The answers given in the House by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in terms of the running of VIA Rail by Mr. Hannigan and in terms of the salary increases given to him and Mr. McMurtry were totally unsatisfactory. I hope the Parliamentary Secretary can give us something resembling a satisfactory explanation for this extravagance on the part of the Government.

**Mr. Len Gustafson (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat surprised the Hon. Member has again raised the question of remuneration levels for the positions and individuals in question. The Hon. Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria) raised this question last week. The Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) noted that the level of remuneration for Canada's High Commissioner to Great Britain was the same as that of our Ambassador to France. I do not need to remind the Hon. Member of the tremendous importance this country places upon our relationship with Great Britain and the Commonwealth. I do not need to remind him that this is traditionally one of the most senior diplomatic appointments Canada makes.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, as Acting Prime Minister, was equally clear in explaining the position of chairmanship of VIA Rail. There is a greater degree of responsibility within the corporation than was the case before. The Hon. Member might refer to the press release dated

February 5 in which the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) announced the appointment of the new VIA Rail chairman. At that time the Minister of Transport made clear that the responsibilities of the new chairman for the long-range planning of the corporation would be increased. He used the example of the Air Canada organization in which the chairman and the president share responsibility.

As a part of the Government's commitment to ensure better administration of Crown corporations, which was so badly needed, particularly in the transportation sector, we have undertaken various administrative changes. It is the greater responsibility which will be carried by the new chairman of VIA Rail and no other aspect of this appointment that influenced the determination of his remuneration level.

I assure the Hon. Member that the Government will continue the commitment of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) to attract individuals of the highest calibre to positions of service both within Canada and abroad. I do not think I have to remind the Hon. Member again of people like Stephen Lewis, our Ambassador to the United Nations; Douglas Roche, our Disarmament Ambassador; Lloyd Francis in Portugal; and Sylvia Gold at the Status of Women. We have begun a new era of appointment and changes with respect to all regions and all Parties of Canada.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 2(1).

The House adjourned at 6.30 p.m.