

Adjournment Debate

to use the same crew on a 100-car train as they might have had on a 150-car train. This is the kind of innovation that I think could be copied in Canada.

I close, Mr. Speaker, because I see you are getting ready to leap, but may I say I do not think the CPR would mind if the government took it over tomorrow. In fact I think the CPR has let its tracks and rolling stock run down in anticipation of this very move. But just the rail takeover would not be enough; we must do something immediately to stop this carnage in the canyon.

Mr. Joseph-Philippe Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Transport Commission has the obligation of ensuring that all railway operations in Canada are carried out in maximum safety. In order to identify the factors involved in railway accidents and explore the effect on safety of operation of the longer heavier trains now being operated, the commission undertook to conduct a railway safety inquiry.

The third report, issued on December 28, 1973, contained the committee's findings and recommendations in specific areas such as signal systems, staff training, slide detectors, fences, and track and bridge maintenance. This report indicated that the earlier formed railway safety advisory committee, consisting of members representing CNR, CPR, Canadian Railway Labour Association and chaired by the RTC, would be expected to work on the conclusions and findings of the general inquiry, and would provide a forum for discussion on matters of railway safety. The

work of the advisory committee is on a continuing basis and the committee is scheduled to meet at regular intervals for the purpose of dealing with material before it in accordance with established priorities.

The committee met on January 25, 1974 at which time the terms of reference of the committee were approved. During this meeting the following two areas were designated as priorities regarding the establishment of higher safety standards: first, condition of track—movement of long trains, heavy trains and high speed trains; and second, inspection of track, and so on. The advisory committee also gave official recognition to the formation of a group to deal with the subject of public disclosure of railway accident reports.

● (2220)

On April 5 the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) released copies of correspondence which was exchanged between himself and the railway presidents on the subject of the CTC report and safety on the railways. These letters certainly highlighted the minister's concern that prompt, sensible and practical measures be taken. The minister has also announced his support for a new type of transport accident investigation structure.

We feel that through the mechanism of the railway safety inquiry and with the co-operation of those who manage, operate and maintain the country's railways, acceptable standards of operation and maintenance of railway trains can be achieved.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.22 p.m.