

*Adjournment Debate*

imposed a maximum speed limit of 35 miles per hour on trains carrying full loads of special dangerous goods. The city is still greatly concerned, however, about trains carrying partial loads or empty cars with residue of dangerous chemicals. Unless some further action is taken, the risks will continue to increase and so will the potential for disaster. The City of Toronto states in its brief, and I quote:

—some risks cannot be avoided in urban areas. The transport by rail of ever increasing loads of toxic and explosive chemicals through high density areas, where evacuation may be difficult if not impossible, imposes an unfair and unjustified risk to many residents of the city of Toronto. The time for action is now for we are just one accident from a disaster.

In its response to the position paper of the Minister of Transport, "Freedom to Move", M-TRAC expresses its concerns that deregulation may lead to laxity in safety. Certainly the proclamation of the transportation of dangerous goods regulations in July of 1985 has alleviated some concerns. However, M-TRAC is more particularly concerned for the people in highly congested urban areas who are especially vulnerable to train derailment and resultant spillage of dangerous cargo.

There are many people who are concerned about this important issue. Harry Behrend, Vice-Chairman of M-TRAC, and my friend, Rose Dyson, are two people who have been greatly concerned about and involved in making the issues of transporting dangerous goods by rail and the speed at which trains pass through heavily urbanized areas, priority concerns. Last summer, my colleague, the Hon. Member for York East (Mr. Redway), my wife Sandy and I went on a fact-finding tour of the CP Rail main line through Toronto to learn more about the situation and the risks involved. CP Rail officials were helpful in answering our inquiries.

One of the ways in which the railways are attempting to make their mode of transportation safer is through the use of a new type of wheel bearing to improve performance and safety standards. I believe CP has converted something like 75 per cent of the bearings to date.

It should be noted, however, that dangerous goods are not transported just by rail, although this is certainly the mode of transport which has attracted the most attention. The use of other modes of transportation, such as by truck or tanker, is also prevalent. It is vital that the appropriate regulations be followed to the letter to ensure that dangerous goods are transported safely, with no threat to the surrounding population. This is an important issue which concerns Canadians, especially those who live in densely populated urban areas, such as my riding of Don Valley East.

● (1825)

On a positive note, a federal task force was set up on March 14, 1986, by the Minister of Transport to study the transportation of dangerous goods by rail in the Metropolitan Toronto area. On the task force are representatives of CN, CP, M-TRAC, and the public at large. While they have two years to

conduct their research and compile their recommendations, speed reduction has been identified as an urgent issue. I look forward to an interim report in this regard. I also look forward to their final recommendations on how to improve the safety factors, thereby protecting the public when dangerous goods are being transported through Metropolitan Toronto so that we never have anything close to the disaster which occurred in Mississauga in 1979.

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, since the Hon. Member for Don Valley East (Mr. Attewell) has dealt to a great extent with rail passenger traffic and the establishment of the task force, I will direct myself more particularly to his concerns regarding trucking.

At the outset, I would remind Hon. Members that regulations respecting the classification of dangerous goods, the documentation and marking of them, the preparation of emergency response plans, the reporting of spills, and, above all, the training of those responsible for the handling of dangerous goods, have already been promulgated. In fact, as the Hon. Member has mentioned, these measures have been in effect across the country since July 1, 1985.

By long-standing agreement with the provinces, they will have the primary role of enforcing the regulations with respect to vehicular traffic, that is, truck traffic, as it respects dangerous goods. Ontario has taken the lead among the provinces in the application of regulations. It has trained all of its highway inspectors and weigh scale operators and it has been working closely with the Ontario Trucking Association and a number of private trucking associations, not the least of which is the Ontario Petroleum Association, to ensure that vehicle operators are fully aware of the nature and hazards of the products they are transporting. The other provinces are conducting the same compliance programs. In fact, all provinces have been enforcing the regulations since February, 1986.

Discussions with a view to amending aspects of the legislation are presently under way which I hope will address, in part, the Hon. Member's concern. However, I must underline for the Hon. Member that this is only enabling legislation. It is the regulations which give teeth to the legislation. It is an awareness program. It is in education that we will achieve safety, not through legislation or regulation alone. Education is equally important.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. This House therefore stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 3(1).

The House adjourned at 6:30 p.m.