

*Adjournment Debate*

national product and its successful penetration of world markets for manufactured goods, including automobiles, radio and television and, more recently, computers and microelectronic products. What did the president of Sony tell his audience in explaining why the Japanese were successful? He said that the difference between the North American and Japanese companies was that North American companies—and he was talking about both the United States and Canada—looked at and thought about almost exclusively this year's balance sheet, while the Japanese companies were thinking and planning for 20 years down the line. That is why they have surged ahead in those fields I have enumerated. Why do I tell this story, Mr. Speaker? I do so because that message should have been studied by both the CNR and CPR and by our government. Yes, business is slow right now but a survey done by the Western Transportation Advisory Council has predicted that westbound bulk exports would increase between 1980 and 1990 in the following manner: coal from 14 million tons to 53 million tons; grain from 10 million tons to 19 million tons; sulphur from 5.4 million tons to 6.8 million tons; potash from 3.6 million tons to 9 million tons, an increase of over 200 per cent.

Our transportation system, Mr. Speaker, is already having difficulty in moving current sales. What will happen four or five years from now if we get the kind of increases which are projected? We will fail completely. Now when business is slow is the time for the railways to do the job that needs to be done to upgrade the system, to doubletrack the system, to modernize the signals and switching system, to build the thousands of new cars, hopper cars, freight cars and engines that we need. Now is the time to renovate much of the rolling stock. If we do not do it now, when will we do it? By 1990 we will be losing hundreds of millions of dollars of sales because we will not be able to deliver the goods that are sold. But the railways say they cannot afford it. I pointed out to the government its announcement of the \$1 billion sale by Bombardier of subway cars to New York city. How was that done? The government helped finance the sale by providing an interest rate of 9.7 per cent. If we can do it for export sales, then I suggest that we can and we should be doing it to improve the transportation system in this country.

• (2220)

I say to the minister that if we can do that for Bombardier, we can do it for the railways. Now is the time to give the railways the kind of financial assistance they need to get the

system ready so the railways can move the products that we will be able to sell four or five years from now. Now is not the time to be having the large-scale lay-offs that have been announced by both railways in the last week.

**Mr. Douglas Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the hon. member has not done his homework. I think he has spent so long attacking railroads that he does not want to pay any attention now when they make an announcement. I am happy to draw to his attention the fact that Canadian Pacific Railway announced today the purchase of 50 new diesel electric locomotives in anticipation of future need, precisely the theme which the hon. member was pointing out.

**Mr. Orlikow:** That does not help the people who have been laid off.

**Mr. Fisher:** This order is worth \$70 million. It will create 300,000 person-hours of work.

It is very important to note, for the sake of the hon. member so that he will know this fact in the future instead of blaming everybody, that 20 of these locomotives will be used on prairie branch lines. This is the first such purchase in ten years made by Canadian Pacific. It is made despite the opposition of the NDP to the streamlining of the grain shipments in western Canada, and despite the losses that railroad has suffered under the Crow rate.

I am also surprised that the hon. member has not done his homework in the area of lay-offs. I know that he is usually much closer to those sorts of questions than he is to grand corporate finance.

I would like to point out to him, as the minister said in reply to the question, that the people who have worked with the railways for two or more years will be collecting 80 per cent of their normal salary while they are laid off.

**Mr. Orlikow:** They will not be producing anything.

**Mr. Fisher:** I think those are important facts, and I am sorry that the hon. member did not know them before he made his intervention because he might have risen in this House instead to congratulate us and to congratulate the companies.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m.

The House adjourned at 10.24 p.m. without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.