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# TORNADO PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

Correct date is June 22nd

1. DATE AND TIME June 22, 1988 night

2. LOCATION OR PATH (attach map) near Coteau-du-Lac, Que. (on CN rail line)

3. PATH LENGTH ☐ NOT KNOWN ☐ <1mi; ☐ 1-4mi; ☐ 5-10mi; ☐ 11-50mi; ☐ LENGTH IF>50mi

4. PATH WIDTH ☐ 5. TORNADO PART OF SQUALL LINE? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN:

6. ANY UNUSUAL COLORATION? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN

7. ANY UNUSUAL SOUND? ☐ YES; ☐ NO; ☐ UNKNOWN

8. IF ANSWER TO 6 OR 7 YES, ELABORATE;

9. LIST ANY ASSOCIATED PHENOMENA — rain
(Such as hail, vivid lightning heavy rain, no rain, etc.)

10. TOTAL DAMAGE ESTIMATE $ 11. TOTAL DEATHS

12. TOTAL INJURED 13. TOTAL HOMELESS

14. LIST ALL REFERENCES

15. SUMMARIZE REMARKS PERTAINING TO (a) FUNNEL; (b) INTERESTING OR CAPRICIOUS EVENTS.

b) Trees uprooted and broken, small sheds blown down, light plane picked up and thrown into a tree.

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881950002 WED JUL.13,1988 PAGE: A7 (ILLUS)
BYLINE: Tony Turrittin
CLASS: Letter to Editor Business
DATELINE: Toronto ONT WORDS: 396

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** Let's get back on track **

Many VIA trains are older than Air*Canada's*oldest cargo planes.

Jeffrey Simpson's two-hour delay on a VIA train bound from Montreal to Ottawa on June 23 (Along Different Lines - June 24) was due to a*tornado* derailing a CN freight train near Coteau, Que., which resulted in major *damage*to main-line track.

This in turn prompted Mr. Simpson to reflect on VIA Rail 's problems in general - its high cost and trains that are often late. Japan's splitting up and privatization of its rail system and TGVs for Canada were briefly considered and dismissed. A solution? More reflection is promised at a later time.

But VIA's problems and the solution are not difficult to grasp. In more than 10 years of operation, VIA has still to be fully modernized by the Government. Its car fleet is on average older than Air Canada's oldest cargo planes.

VIA still doesn't have its own legal mandate and cannot engage in many ancillary profit-making activities that other transportation companies routinely do. VIA still does not own its major terminals. There are numerous track and signal bottlenecks that slow up passenger trains and guarantee conflicts with freights.

But modernization is critical. When Amtrak in the United States was modernized, it was able to bring its need for an operating subsidy down substantially and attract ever more riders.

The fact is that train ridership is up everywhere in Europe, the United States and even for VIA. Virtually all European countries have embarked on major capital improvements for their passenger rail systems - Italy will spend $40-billion over the next seven years. In the United States, Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis has taken a pro-rail position going into the election.

Meanwhile, in Canada the obvious steps to improve VIA Rail and to bring an end to Mr. Simpson's troubles still elude federal and provincial governments.

Ironically, the same day that VIA trains were delayed outside Montreal, a truck overturned east of Oshawa, Ont., tying up Highway 401 for more than four hours in the morning. But governments don't hesitate in ever widening and expanding highways.

Sitting in traffic jams on highways, my thoughts turn to the advantages of subways, commuter trains and even high-speed rail transportation. A modern and liberated VIA is an obvious step for governments to take.

Tony Turrittin
National President
Transport 2000 Canada
Toronto

ADDED SEARCH TERMS:
GEOGRAPHIC NAME: *Canada*
SUBJECT TERM: railways; transportation
ORGANIZATION NAME: VIA Rail

**PROVINCE**

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# Train derailed, homes damaged in high winds

By CATHERINE BUCKIE
and IRWIN BLOCK
of The Gazette

Residents of the quiet town of Coteau du Lac took advantage of the cool temperatures and the bright sunshine yesterday to clean up damage from high winds that hit the town Wednesday night.

The storm only took about 10 minutes, residents said, but it ripped up trees, toppled sheds and tossed a small plane into a tree.

About 35,000 homes in the area between Valleyfield and Napierville, 50 kilometres southwest of Montreal, were left without electricity, Hydro-Québec said.

The winds were also blamed for Wednesday night's freight-train derailment at nearby Coteau Station. Twenty-five cars in a 134-car train flipped over, but the cause of the mishap is still a mystery, CN official Ewa Jarmicka said.

Investigators believe 135 km/h winds, with more violent gusts, may have caused the derailment but were not certain, Jarmicka said. "People who have seen these things before are still scratching their heads."

About 200 metres of westbound track and a shorter stretch of eastbound track were damaged in the derailment. One set of tracks was to be repaired by last night and CN officials were hoping to complete repairs of the second track by tonight.



**Workmen examine derailed freight train, damaged track.**

Via Rail trains to and from Ottawa and Toronto were running up to two hours late yesterday as a result of the derailment.

Wednesday night, buses were used to bring 146 Via Rail passengers to Montreal from Toronto via Cornwall, Ont. and another 126 from Ottawa, Via official Marcel Bordeleau said.

The only signs of the storm in Coteau du Lac were a couple of houses under construction whose skeletal second storeys had been blown away and the roof of a carport sitting flat on a driveway.

Paul Pilon, owner of the carport roof, said he was in his kitchen when the storm started. "The power was out so I was looking for candles when I heard a 'boom' and the carport had fallen down."

The structure crushed Pilon's 1988 Cadillac but he said he wasn't worried because the insurance would pay for the damage.

The storm was more frightening for residents and campers at nearby Seigneurie du Solange campground.

The road in front of Oscar Lajeunesse's trailer was littered with branches that had been knocked down during the storm, and the tree right in front of the trailer was pulled out of the ground.

He said the wind knocked his trailer back and forth, but didn't cause any damage. Most of the damage in the park was to awnings and brick fireplaces.

Campground owner Suzanne Leveillé said she was lucky.

"The trees could have fallen on the trailers but instead they fell on the road."

Jeannine Garon, 62, was in her trailer when the storm hit.

"It started to rain and I was just closing the door when I saw the trees fall. It was like a white cloud. I was so afraid."

She said she was worried about her friend Margot Bélanger, 70, who was out driving in the storm. But Bélanger stopped at a restaurant to wait for it to pass and worried about her friends in the campground.

Coteau du Lac councillor Pierre Chevrier said he made a tour of the area first thing in the morning to see what kind of damage had been done the night before. "There were a lot of branches and whole trees knocked down."

On Rivière de l'Ile Rd. at the airplane base many of the planes were damaged or thrown into trees.

But Pilon summed resident's reaction up best when he said: "It's happened other places, last night (Wednesday) was our turn."



Gazette photos, Len Skafowy

Plane is suspended in tree near Coteau Landing after being tossed by violent storm.

Shopping
Anywhere Else