

Western Grain Transportation Act

Sometimes we have had to resort to writing long letters to the railways demanding an explanation. We would receive back detailed responses indicating that during recent weeks their unloads at Thunder Bay have gone down from an average of 3,183 cars per week to 2,283 per week and, in a later period, down to 1,723 cars per week. Why is there this bottleneck? How can we put our finger on the problem? Obviously the railways were not able to do anything about it. They really had no particular motivation to deal with the problem. They said that the Grain Transportation Agency is responsible, but if the Administrator could compel the railways to ensure that there is an exchange, the situation would be improved. Sometimes that is necessary, especially when we think of ports such as the Port of Churchill.

When we consider the block system in place on the Prairies, we realize there are some 48 different blocks from which grain is taken. The grain taken to port has to match a particular request or a particular sale which has been committed. We have to get grain out of the block system which will match the particular request or sales commitment. If people do not understand much about the shipment of grain out West, they could just picture the checkerboard which has been developed to ensure an efficient movement of grain. Also they could picture that CN and CP lines sometimes run closely parallel and sometimes at great distances from each other. The most efficient way to move grain is to see what type of grain is required, for example at Churchill, and to move it from the closest block, even if it is on a CPR line and it is a CNR line which goes all the way up to Churchill. It should make obvious sense to Hon. Members opposite that we need someone with the authority to require that the shortest route be taken.

There are many illustrations in my constituency. I could refer to the Erwood subdivision or to the line which goes from Swan River through the Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan. There are lines which have not been used but should be used for the transportation of grain. There are lines which are even shorter than the more circuitous routes which could be used. There are such lines through Canora or through Preeceville if we want to move grain from the Swan River Valley. If the Administrator had teeth, he could ensure that those types of movements took place and that exchanges, where necessary, would also take place. What we have at stake is the welfare of producers. No one here really needs to be told about the plight of the producers in western Canada.

I see Mr. Speaker indicating that my time is up. I thank the House for the opportunity to illustrate in the form of case histories the particular problems faced by farmers if they cannot get their grain to market or cannot store it on their own farms because they do not have the granary or storage space. It is incumbent upon Hon. Members opposite to acquaint themselves with the problems faced by farmers in western Canada if this type of authority is not vested in the Administrator. I hope Hon. Members opposite will give unanimous consent to this amendment.

**PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT
MOTION***[English]*

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 45, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Broadview-Greenwood (Ms. McDonald), Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission—Responsibility to deal with televised pornography. (b) Inquiry respecting penalties; the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow), Cultural Affairs—Recommendation that libraries should compensate authors. (b) Request for ministerial action; the Hon. Member for Surrey-White Rock-North Delta (Mr. Friesen), Provincial Affairs—Federal Examination of provincial legislation. (b) Grant to British Columbia organization.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS*[English]***WESTERN GRAIN TRANSPORTATION ACT**

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-155, an Act to facilitate the transportation, shipping and handling of western grain and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Transport; and on Motion No. 33 (Mr. Mazankowski).

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, I was about to suggest that we give some extra time to the Hon. Member for Dauphin-Swan River (Mr. Lewycky) to finish his remarks, but he has to attend a committee meeting so I will not bother.

Motion No. 33 concerns the Grain Transportation Agency Administrator. I think some excellent points have been raised in regard to this matter, but for a moment or so I would like to deal with the major point of the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Transport, the Hon. Member for Northumberland-Miramichi (Mr. Dionne), who said that he did not favour this amendment because the authority already rests with the Canadian Transport Commission or the railway section of the CTC. I agree the authority is there, but I do not know of one case in the history of the CTC where it was used in the interests of the farmer, in the interests of the producer. Our major concern today is the producer, the man on the land who has to receive more consideration than he has ever had in the past. I agree that the Grain Transportation Agency Administrator has a tremendous job in front of him, if he does the job he is supposed to do. If we do not give him the tools to do the job, we might just as well not appoint him. If all he can do is to suggest, that is not good enough.