

February 17, 1982. The writer is explaining the Crow rate to the Renfrew reading public as follows:

For us here in Renfrew county, it is sometimes difficult to understand what the Crow rate is all about. The Crow rate was the name given to an agreement signed by the federal government, the CPR and the farmers of the west some 85 years ago. It was part of Confederation.

That is all the writer has to say. The eastern farmers and the eastern people know that the Crow rate is part of the building of this nation.

Let us put all of this into perspective. We are in the middle of a centralizing movement that has existed since the war. Everyone knows what I am talking about. We have listened to the constitutional debate. We have seen the National Transportation Act of 1967 passed with its centralizing power. We have seen the energy policy of this government over the last two or three years deliberately unconstitutionally taking an extra \$50 billion in taxes from the western provinces.

We have witnessed the unilateral attempt by the government to change the Constitution. We have seen the pressure of various ministers to set up national marketing boards, not to sell stuff but to control people. I could give a thousand other examples, but people know that the politicians in government have put their faith in experts. Experts have a record of being wrong, a record which has been unsurpassed in the last 20 years.

The Hall commission report dealing with this subject recommended no change in the Crow. The Hall commission heard all of the same arguments from the railways. All the groups said "Keep the Crow. Set up a prairie rail authority run by prairie people, and we will take all the lands on which you claim you are losing money and we will run them. We will make money out of them and then we will give them back to you." They brought in the concept that instead of pulling back and raising rates, they should help develop the west.

This could be stated to be a farm position of all parties, of all politicians. No one should ask the farmers of western Canada to give one inch on this Crow issue until the government does a number of things. First, the government should stop interfering with the Canadian Wheat Board and the Board of Grain Commissioners. Those boards should have the independence and the right to carry out their functions without interference. Every farmer knows what I am talking about, particularly when it comes to these low prices of \$1 below what they should be. They are the result of this type of interference.

Second, a prairie rail authority should be in place looking after the 2,000 miles of railroad on which they claim they lose money. Some centralized group should not be trying to run it. That is mentioned in the Hall commission report.

Third, the railways should railroad and carry out the terms of the Railway Act, the National Transportation Act and other directives of the government. No amount of guarantees by a government that has a record of not keeping the law will suffice, because for 50 years the railways have ignored all directives from government. Metric conversion is supposed to be taking place. Are the railways converting to metric? They have never even thought about it. The railways do not bother

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about the nitwits we have around here. Why should they? They would never force it on the railways.

Fourth, we want from this government less talk about some mysterious development program. We want to know what the government is going to do about the development of the geothermal resources, which admittedly belong to the provinces. We want to know what is going to be done about the gas reserves. We want to know what is being done with all of the coal in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. We want to know what we are going to do with all the water that is available.

In particular, we want to see a transportation system outlined in black and white and in the actual state of being built. We have to have a railway that is non-stop from the south of Saskatchewan to Churchill to haul potash, coal, grain, for eight to ten months of the year to Churchill. This proposal has been before the western provinces for 60 long years. If all of this were formulated over the next five, ten or 15 years and it is shown that you mean business and action, then I think the farmers would be willing to sit down and consider rationally what should be done.

I am confident that if the government goes forward with this development program, it will make so much money for the railroads and so much money for the provinces, will create jobs and give additional taxes to the federal government, that we will not hear of the Crow rate for a long time.

This has happened before. The railways came roaring in here several times asking for changes in the Crow rate. In 1967 they admitted publicly, and every party in the House admitted, they were making money out of the Crow rate. So we voted them down. Parliament would not even give up the right to maintain that Crow rate to any board that we set up, like the national transportation board.

I know the history the hard way, but I am simply saying to all Canadians that when one is caught breaking the law, when one is caught breaking the Constitution, one has no way of getting this proposal through. There has to be trust and there is none.

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Then there is the crowning insult. Think of the fact that, after all this bad advice we have received from economists in the last 25 or 30 years, they went out and said there is no future for farmers in any part of Canada. They said we had to get rid of two out of every three farmers. They would not agree there was a world market, they would not agree there were hungry people out there willing to work and pay for food. In a report to the government in 1969 they recommended we get rid of two out of three farmers. We should be kind to the old ones by paying them to get off, but get rid of the young ones first. All they held out in the future for westerners was the export of 360 million bushels a year. What are we exporting now? Over one billion bushels a year, and exports are going up all the time because the world needs them and we can produce. But we have to have a railway system to get the produce out.