

Transportation

knows it all. Sooner or later all this will have to sink in.

Until the last couple of years the railways have continuously been harping, as had the newspapers in all Canada—other than the western newspapers, of course—that grain movement does not pay. Surely the parliamentary secretary must have read that at one time. Today one does not hear that, because grain movement is a paying proposition.

We are suddenly told, "Do not fear, nothing will happen; this is merely an accounting process." It is an accounting process for whom? This is an opening for the railways, who keep harping about the Crowsnest agreement. If they say that the 22 cents or 23 cents they get is not compensating them for grain movement, they forget the other aspects; they forget what was given to them under the original agreement.

Nothing in this bill deals with the original agreement. The minister can stand there and talk until he is blue in the face: He will not convince me or any other farmer that he is doing justice to the western farmer. I do not care if he condemns the hon. member for Rosthern, the hon. member for Acadia, the hon. member for Qu'Appelle, or any other hon. member for suggesting that this is not the right approach. The minister knows full well that he has opened the whole question.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): He has opened the whole bill.

Mr. Korchinski: The minister can stand there and say that it is perfectly all right to charge the farmers more, but that it is not perfectly all right to see what he can get out of the Canadian Pacific, for example. He does not mention that. While I might be one of those who might defend the Canadian Pacific, I am not prepared to accept the notion that we should expect our farmers to move their grain for 50, 60 or 70 miles to the elevator, to prove that the railways can make money.

● (9:50 p.m.)

You could bring grain to Winnipeg from every point 400 miles or 450 miles away. The farmers, having paid the additional cost, might well move it to the lakehead. But what have you done to the Crowsnest pass agreement? There are several ways of destroying that agreement. One of them is the way the minister is using tonight. He has opened it up. He wants it to be proven to the public—and public opinion can bring a lot of pressure to bear. I know there are more people in eastern Canada than in the west. But if the minister

[Mr. Korchinski.]

remembers his words, what he said tonight was that the bulk of the payment for any freight would have to come from the west, anyway, so why would we complain. That is what he said, exactly. It does not matter whether you pay it one way or another: You will have to pay it. That is what he said.

Are we to allow any legislation to erode the Crowsnest pass agreement, or are we not? I cannot stand here and accept what the minister tells us. I cannot for one minute think that the Crowsnest pass must make the grain pay for everything in the west, and then move in other freight over and above—minerals, or lumber or anything else.

I cannot accept the fact that the minister tells us this is nothing, that this is merely an investigation. It is an investigation into what? It is opening a way for the railways to try to prove something to the commission. Whether they postpone this thing for two or three years or whether they start immediately after this bill is passed, it does not matter. The fact is that the reporters will continually harp on this one subject, as they did at the time when there was a suggestion that a transport bill would be passed. Nobody in Canada will convince me otherwise, and I think I follow the press as closely as does any other hon. member, including the minister.

I have not seen much reference to the Crowsnest pass agreement in the last couple of years. One of the reasons is the movement of grain, perhaps a realization that the movement of grain is compensatory. The second is that newspapermen are not going to harp on something which they know they can harp on later, knowing that this legislation exists. Why should any manufacturer in the east have a charge against his final products, when the revenue can be obtained in another way,—through the Crowsnest pass agreement?

Prove to the world that the Crowsnest pass agreement is wrong. Prove to the world that the British North America Act is all wrong, and let us destroy the whole thing. How silly that argument is. Surely there must be some value in the whole thing. I cannot accept the premise that it is all wrong, though there may be weaknesses in it. I cannot accept the premise that we should give the railway companies these gifts, and when the railway companies are given these gifts, that we should not reveal what has happened to the gifts—what revenues they have derived.

The fact is, one must preserve the Crowsnest pass agreement for the benefit of those farmers who have survived because of