

we would be able to get down to the subject matter with which we are concerned tonight.

Since I arrived in this House in 1972—and long before that—the national problem of transportation has been presented to the Government on your right, Sir, which has been the same government for too long. That problem abounds from coast to coast in Canada. It has deteriorated to the point that one sees wheels that go with boxcars and other cars on the railroad transported from Atlantic Canada to some other assembly point or repair point by trucks. They have travelled through your constituency, Mr. Speaker, and they have travelled through mine by the thousands of truckloads. What is wrong with the national transportation policy when the railroad does not even transport its own wheels? That problem has not been addressed nationally. It is high time that it were.

From the earliest days that I participated in the Standing Committee on Transport we were told repeatedly—not by CP representatives, the pet peeve of those on my left, but by the executive of the Canadian National Railway, one of the stars of the Crown corporations of this land—that unless something were done to assist the railroads with their transportation problems, we, the CN, could not bear up under the losses. That estimated loss was passed on to some members of this committee. It reached \$140 million a year for the CNR. But that executive never dared, apparently, to put figures in the report of the transportation committee or in the CN's own report of its losses in dollars and cents.

Let us forget for a moment whether this may or may not be of benefit to the CPR. Let us bear in mind that we have a Crown corporation which serves this nation that needs assistance through this Bill. This had to be addressed either by direct subsidization or by some kind of adjustment to the Crow rate.

We seem to be able to support Crown corporations. I have not heard any of those Members from the NDP suggesting that \$1.2 billion is too much for Canadair to lose, yet we are not talking in those kind of figures in this Bill. I have not yet heard the NDP Members complain about the subsidy for that transportation company named Maislin in the form of the free interest rate it got. Nor have I heard Members of the NDP complain that there may be a new investment development corporation and a Crown corporation to take over the Crown deadbeats.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please. The Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am sure the Hon. Member does not intend to mislead the House, but he will recall that we were the first to bring attention to the recent Canadair troubles. We did it before the Tories brought it up in this particular instance. We also brought the Maislin—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please. That is debate. The Hon. Member for Carleton-Charlotte.

Western Grain Transportation Act

Mr. McCain: The burlblings from the birds' nest, Mr. Speaker.

There are things which have to be addressed. We have not addressed the inequities that have developed in the freight costs for the feed industry in Atlantic Canada and eastern Quebec; nor has the NDP. Never has this been mentioned. The Government has not addressed the problem of transportation from Atlantic Canada. I heard not a murmur from the NDP when the express service, so vital to the transportation of fresh fish, was cancelled and the line abandoned in Atlantic Canada. Let us talk transportation and let us quit the burlblings.

We had a succession of studies done on behalf of transportation, particularly in western Canada, first the subject was brought forward by the western premiers. Those four premiers for in concert once in their lives agreed that some consideration should be given to the transportation problem in the west. Then there was a study done in 1973 or 1974 by the Western Economic Opportunities Conference. Again, that problem was addressed. There was no NDP support for any consideration of the problem at that time. Later we had the Hall Report. Some recommendations were made, particularly with respect to rail line abandonment. That was never thoroughly addressed by a government. In addition to that we had the Snavelly Report which outlined unequivocally the losses of the railroads, including the CNR. It made it obvious that there was no way transportation could continue to exist with losses of that nature. That loss estimate did not come from the Conservative Party. It did not come from the NDP and it has been ignored to date by the Liberal Party.

When it was finally recognized that something had to be done we were presented with an omnibus bill which refuses to allow the subject to be addressed item by item as it should be. The evils of the omnibus bill are with us, and that is one of the reasons this Bill has not made the progress in this House that it otherwise would have made.

As I did when I last spoke on this Bill, I again want to point out that there have been suggestions for amendments to this Bill emanating from this side of the House. Had there been an element of favourable acceptance of the proposals for amendment, we would not find ourselves in a position where by one means or another the Government had to impose closure on our debate.

This Government has just not recognized all the problems that exist. The Government has failed to address the decline in the efficiency and the productivity of the rail system in the last 25 years. I have said repeatedly, as it applies to rail service, there is no service in Canada for which we have continuously paid more in excess of the rate of inflation and received less in the line of proper service than from the railroads of this country. Even the Post Office is lily pure compared to the railroads, as far as I from Atlantic Canada am concerned, Mr. Speaker. These problems have not been addressed by Government, yet they have come to attention through the discontent of the public using transportation services. They have not been addressed.