

The Minister of Transport has stated what he thinks our transportation should be in this country, yet he has allowed the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board to make statements about transportation. If I were in the position of the Minister of Transport and one of my colleagues did that to me, I would punch him in the mouth.

The minister in charge of the wheat board stated the Crowsnest Pass rates should be reviewed. He made a number of speeches on the Crowsnest Pass agreement. However, in answer to the hon. member for Lisgar, the Minister of Transport assured him he need not worry, that that item is not being reviewed. I would like to know who is correct on this, the Minister of Transport or the minister in charge of the wheat board. Who is calling the shots on this?

I said at the beginning of my remarks that I do not think the Minister of Transport has the support and co-operation of his colleagues in cabinet and caucus. He is almost alone trying to win the battle of transportation, a battle Canadians have been trying to win for the past 90 years. One of the minister's colleagues is trying to cut not only his throat but the throats of all Canadians.

In the throne speech of last September a long section was devoted to transportation. It stated:

Transportation must be an instrument of national purpose, designed to achieve broad social and economic objectives.

That is a beautiful quote. I could not have written it better myself. It continued:

The government does not believe the principles underlying the present transportation system or its methods of management and operation are adequate to meet current and future national aspirations.

Not even the NDP could have put a better line in the throne speech than that. What has happened since? We got a small beginning. I hope the minister will introduce some minor amendments to this bill. Commitments and promises were made by the Prime Minister, the minister, and their predecessors, including the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) when he was Prime Minister. Most of this is not new. We have had it *ad nauseam* year in and year out.

I still believe the Minister of Transport is genuinely sincere about this. I am sorry he was not able to bring in this bill sooner. It is very short. There is not much to it. We have been waiting for this bill for 20 months. I can only assume it was not brought in sooner because the minister's colleagues in cabinet and caucus objected. The minister had a great deal of difficulty persuading them to bring this forward, if for no other reason than to honour a commitment made before and since WEOC.

I say to the Minister of Transport that I will support him when it comes to the Crowsnest Pass rates. As far as I am concerned, the minister in charge of the wheat board would have a better chance trying to amend the Ten Commandments than changing the Crowsnest Pass rates.

I have never believed the railroads' claim with regard to their losses in hauling grain. They have never put a figure on those losses. We have never been given the cost to move a bushel of grain from point A to point B, yet we are expected to believe them. I believe that in this field the unit cost of moving grain has been cut in half in the last ten to 15 years. We need this bill to prove that the railways

### Railway Act

are not losing the kind of money they claim they are losing on the Crowsnest Pass rates. That is why the provinces of western Canada are asking for this information, whether the CTC already has it or not.

I should like to say a word here about rapeseed and rapeseed products. I am not sure what disclosure may do to encourage the government to reach a decision on these items. When one considers the freight rates charged on rapeseed and rapeseed oil one cannot help wonder why it is taking so long to determine this matter.

• (2230)

When the Minister of Transport was asked why the cabinet had not made up its mind on the rapeseed question he said, "That is Otto Lang's baby." Well, it seems to have been an abortion. The minister in charge of the Wheat Board says he is not sure whether anything will be done this year, even though the matter has already been under consideration for a year. According to the Minister of Transport, it is the Minister of Justices' baby, and he cannot get off the hook lightly. I know he has assumed prerogatives which belong to the Minister of Transport, sounding off with policy announcements and making statements he has no right to make. I can only assume he is doing this without the knowledge of the Minister of Transport; I would hate to think the minister agrees with his suggestions.

One rapeseed mill has already been sold because of the delay in reaching a decision. The minister in charge of the Wheat Board says he is not sure whether he can get this matter settled in cabinet before the end of the year. If the Minister of Transport feels the bill before us would help him by giving him more authority, I am all for it. I hope that once he is armed with these powers he will not be in a hurry to review the Crowsnest Pass rates. I urge, too, that there should be no delay in reaching a decision with regard to rapeseed rates. We want information as to the cost not only of moving people and commodities but the cost with regard to the operational portions of the branch lines and particular sections of the main lines, because I do not believe the figures already offered.

I believe the minister should invite experts from outside, from the provinces, to help him in reviewing these costs. I should like him to invite experts from other countries to take a careful look at what the railroads here claim to be their costs. It is my belief that some of those costs are based on trackage which was written off 50 years ago. There are still rails in use which were put down in 1910. I should like to know all these costs. So would the provinces. So would the Minister of Transport. I hope the minister will move a couple of amendments in committee.

We shall deal with the matter quickly because the provinces are ready to make their requests, but in the meantime I trust the government will hold the line with regard to freight rate increases which would further magnify the inequities in the structure. We shall support the legislation, but much more is needed and we hope the government will not be slow in taking action accordingly.

[Translation]

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Madam Speaker, further to the agreement reached today on Bill C-48 by the