

*Western Grain Transportation Act*

a lot of common sense. I would think that if they would look, listen and read a little more carefully, a little more completely, then maybe, just maybe, it would make sense to them as well.

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to defer to my good friend, the Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp), if I could, or the Hon. Member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta), for that matter.

**Mr. Epp:** Or any one of us.

**Mr. Nystrom:** "Either" one.

**Mr. Epp:** Either one.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Either one. Watch your grammar.

I think Motion No. 34 is fairly important. It is a motion placed on the Order Paper by the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin) and would amend Clause 17 of the Act. The clause, Mr. Speaker, just to refresh your memory, gives the Administrator, on behalf of the Minister, the power to "enter into agreements to provide for the movement of grain by motor vehicle transport where, in his opinion, such agreements would be in the best interests of the grain producer".

I have a couple of concerns about this as a Member who comes from a very rural riding with many branch lines and small towns. I have concern about the small towns themselves and their future. My second concern, and it is the reason I think the Conservatives should be supporting the motion, is that I hesitated once again to give one person so much power. Why centralize so much power in the hands of one person, in the hands of the Administrator? That is a very valid criticism of our bureaucracy today, that too few people have too much power here in Ottawa. That works against the wishes and the best intent of what we want this country to be all about.

I know my friend, the Hon. Member for Provencher, who sat for many long hours on our Constitution committee a couple of years ago, certainly agrees with that as a principle. We should certainly work toward a more centralized Canada, more local control, local people having more say over their lives and more input over the direction of their communities. Therefore, I believe the Hon. Member for Regina West is going in the right direction here by ensuring that the Administrator, acting in concert with the Minister, would not have the power arbitrarily to abandon, in effect, certain rail lines. That is the power we are asked to give this individual if Motion No. 34 does not pass. In fact, it is a Conservative motion, and I am sure that Members of that Party are not very proud of that fact, I just ask Hon. Members to consider it very closely because it does give the Administrator tremendous discretionary power.

I am very leery of giving a public servant or any one person, be it a public servant or a private bureaucrat in a private company, that much power. I believe we should decentralize powers as much as possible for the benefit of the ordinary people of Canada, because they know best what decisions to make affecting their own community, whether it be Lethbridge, Yorkton, Trois-Rivières or anywhere else in Canada. I

just do not like this trend of centralization that I hear being discussed by so many Members of the Liberals and Conservative Parties. I know my friend, the Hon. Member for Provencher, would certainly not agree with that trend and that is why he will be rising in a few minutes to agree with the Hon. Member for Regina West, because he, too, does not want to centralize more and more power in the hands of one bureaucrat. He also wants to have a more democratic society and a more decentralized society where ordinary citizens have more power.

● (1520)

**An Hon. Member:** A community of communities.

**Mr. Nystrom:** I am sure he is very interested in a community of communities. That cannot occur when we centralize power in the hands of the Administrator to make arbitrary decisions over rail lines.

Under a democratic socialist government, I am sure there would be a very decentralized economy. Let me cite some history for the Member from New Brunswick. Saskatchewan has the most decentralized economy in the country. We have the country elevator systems which are very decentralized. The Wheat Pool ships over half of our grain that is owned by the farmers themselves, with one farmer, one vote. There are co-op stores found in every community as well as co-op pharmacies, co-op cafeterias, co-op garages and so on. It is very decentralized.

**An Hon. Member:** Co-ops are not socialist. That is capitalism.

**Mr. Nystrom:** In all of these places we have co-op committees, Wheat Pool committees and UGG committees. In this democratic socialist society, or economic model, they make the decisions that control those economic enterprises. I would like to see a greater economic democratic system in our country.

**Mr. Thacker:** People had to leave for generations to get a job.

**Mr. Nystrom:** People had to leave for generations because we had Jimmy Gardiner, Patterson, that famous Conservative, R. B. Bennett, and Ross Thatcher, another famous Conservative who called himself a Liberal. Of course, when Allan Blakeney was elected, the population of the Province went up.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. I call to the attention of the Hon. Member that debate at report stage should be strictly relevant to the amendments before the House.

**Mr. Benjamin:** He was reasonably provoked.

**Mr. Nystrom:** I guess I am no more unreasonable than the hecklers, Mr. Speaker. I should refrain from replying. I just wanted to say that unemployment has almost doubled in our Province in the last 18 months and I think that answers the question.

**Mr. Epp:** Manitoba's went up too.