

Western Grain Transportation Act

the Liberals. They like to open the barrel and give all the money they have to their friends. A lot of their friends sort of run off into the hills with it and do whatever they fancy.

What we are trying to do in Motion No. 50 is to bring some kind of legitimacy and have some kind of framework whereby those hundreds of millions of dollars which go each year to the railroads are at least brought back and reinvested. I do not think any Members in this House need to go too far for information. The parliamentary Library is here and the recommendations of Mr. Justice Hall's Royal Commission are lying there waiting for any Liberal or Tory Member to read. Mr. Justice Emmett Hall points out what has happened in terms of the very pale and weak legislation that has been passed historically by the House, the failure of the House of Commons in terms of public accounts to make sure that moneys from the public Treasury are used to rehabilitate branch lines or used to maintain the main-lines.

A lot of Members, particularly on the Government side, including the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy), and the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) in particular, have taken to saying in the House in recent weeks and months that if Members on the Opposition benches would stop slowing down passage of Bill C-155 there would be a half a million more jobs in Canada. We are speaking directly to that in Motion No. 50. The Government is not being entirely open and honest when it says that, once Bill C-155 is passed, suddenly there will be hundreds of thousands of jobs. My constituency is a case in point. There is over \$100 million in rail line upgrading going on right now in terms of planning. But I know that when Government Members are talking about the Prince George to Prince Rupert line they always say that if Bill C-155 is passed, there will be upgrading. That is sheer poppycock. Upgrading is going on now and the railways planned it a long time ago.

I would be interested in hearing from Government Members why they oppose having some teeth put into Clause 29 which would require public money and money from producers, that has been duly paid for the transportation of grain and some specialty grains either to Prince Rupert, Vancouver, Churchill or the Lakehead, why those moneys—if there are moneys left over each year and if there are additional moneys that have been raised—should not go back into reinvestment in the rail lines. I have heard nothing from the Tories or from the Government Members as to why they do not support that. I will come back to Motion No. 50 in a moment.

The Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) this evening has taken to saying that this group of amendments, Motions Nos. 50 and 52, is frivolous. I am sure the Hon. Member for Portage-Marquette (Mr. Mayer) is interested to know that. One of the amendments is his. Perhaps the Tories could get their act together on that. I think the amendment put by the Hon. Member for Portage-Marquette is identical to that of my colleague, the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin). I think this is something that Members in the House clearly should support if one can reflect on recent speeches made by all Parties in this House on access to

information. I think any Canadian who wanted to go back and read those debates would think there is something quite different going on from day to day in this House depending upon the politics of it.

Motions Nos. 52 and 53 are identical and are really quite simple in their intent. It is to remove the provision in the legislation that would require members of the Senior Grain Transportation Committee to treat as confidential any information declared to be so by the railroads. There are three principal arguments for that. One, the railroads should not have the right to impose secrecy on the Committee. I think all Members in the House would support that. Second, it could come to pass that public disclosure of information would be one of the most effective ways available for the Committee to fulfil its mandate. I think that is clear in any case. Information should go out to the public whether it concerns the damming of a river or, as in this case, the hiding of information about what is really going on in the Senior Grain Transportation Committee, because the producers cannot mobilize themselves politically and ask questions of their Members or direct questions to this House unless they have access to that information.

I know this side of the House at least is united on Motions Nos. 52 and 53. I think Canadians have a right—I know we will not get it—to hear from the Government side why it opposes these amendments, which are really access to information. The third point in support of Motions Nos. 52 and 53 is that decisions of a confidential nature on the Committee's deliberation or the information available to it should be the prerogative of the Committee, not the railroads. I think again that speaks for itself.

I would like to touch briefly on the points made by the Hon. Member for Vegreville when Motions Nos. 50, 52 and 53 were just coming up. The point the Hon. Member was trying to make was that somehow Motion No. 50—and I know other Members of the Opposition have tried to make this point—is breaking the Crow. Tory Members should come clean. The public record is clear. The Hon. Member for Vegreville, as Minister of Transport, in fact started the changes to the Crow rate. He was the implementor of Bill C-155. The Tories at least three years ago decided they were going to kill the Crow. They support Bill C-155 but are trying various parliamentary manoeuvres to try to make that seem to their constituent not to be the case. But the Tories want a review after the fact. I do not know if anybody goes to visit physicians very often, but you do not ask for open heart surgery and then have a heart specialist check to see whether or not you needed it after the fact. The problem with Bill C-155, as producers know, and as Canadians generally know, is that the impact on farmers, whether it will bankrupt 30,000 or 40,000 farmers in Canada, is still a bit of an unknown. For the Tories to say, "We do not want five times Crow until three years from now", sure, farmers will grab at that, but the fact is the Tories want a review after the legislation is passed. They expect to be Government. They may not be but they expect to be Government. I think they would do this House a great deal of credit, as would Hon. Members on the Government side, if they