

Canada have not had a chance to think about this, much less receive information and look at the issues in an analytical way. This is very typical of the Government. It was also typical of the former Liberal Government. We had hoped that the new Government would end the Liberal tradition of ignoring the West. This is what the Government told us, it was going to make sure that the west was finally a full participant in Confederation, and would no longer be ignored.

I am sure many Members from the west will regret this, but unfortunately the tradition of ignoring the West has continued. It must be embarrassing to Conservative Members of Parliament who are from the west. I know it is for those from British Columbia. Those Members are supposed to represent the West here, have some power and impact on decisions made by the Cabinet and on important portfolios like the transportation portfolio which is vital to western Canada, yet they do not appear to have any influence.

The result of this poor consultation process is poor legislation. That is why we are obliged to oppose it. That is why in this amendment we have asked for a postponement so that there can be more study. It jeopardizes safety, jobs, vital services, regional development and, as I said earlier, our sovereignty. It is unfortunate, because Liberal and Conservative Governments have neglected the importance of revamping transportation regulations over the last 20 years. We would certainly agree that regulations need to be reviewed, changed and improved, but not improved by deregulating and providing a threat in many areas of Canadian life and the economy.

• (1550)

I should like to spend a few moments explaining to my colleagues why the Bill is of great concern to my constituents in Vancouver East and to myself as their representative and as the critic responsible for social policy and status of women.

As I said earlier, a great many people in the riding of Vancouver East are employed in the transportation sector. The Port of Vancouver is Canada's link to the Pacific Rim. It employs thousands of workers directly and indirectly around Vancouver. Every time I return to my riding, I talk with many transportation workers.

We are concerned about a number of things which could have a very negative impact upon the Port of Vancouver. I understand that \$3 billion of rail revenues is now involved in east-west traffic and that 70 per cent of it originates in Canada.

I have raised the following issue in the House and have written to the Minister of Transport about it many times. We are very concerned that CN Rail has introduced tariffs which have the effect of diverting freight traffic from eastern Canada, not through the western Canadian transportation system and to the Port of Vancouver, but down to Chicago and from there through the American transportation routes to the Port of Seattle, the Port of Tacoma, and other West Coast ports. This has already started. We are very concerned about

it. The Port of Vancouver is very concerned about it as well because it means a great loss of business.

This piece of legislation will encourage more and more of that kind of thing. It will allow U.S. rail and trucking companies to raid the freight traffic of Canadian railways and truckers. They will be able to come in, take over Canadian goods, and transport them through the United States. They will take them south to Conrail and Burlington Northern, and they will take them west to American ports. I am talking about Canadian goods and goods which will eventually come from those ports into Canada.

The new Bill gives much more leverage to U.S. truckers and railways to come into Canada. However, does it provide for the same kind of interchange for Canadian truckers into the United States? Not at all. As I understand it, there are American restrictions which prevent this. It is a good example of the double jeopardy system. Of course it is symbolic in many other free trade negotiations which are not free at all; they are one-sided.

We are also very concerned about the impact of the Bill on western grain transportation administration. When the Act was before the House we pressed very hard for a special amendment to ensure that Canadian grain travelling on Canadian rails went to the Pacific Rim through Canadian ports, the Port of Vancouver and the Port of Prince Rupert. We felt that it was extremely important in that it was part of our national economy and part of our national transportation system.

Now we hear that Mr. Horner, the administrator for WGTA, is trying to remove this particular amendment in order to allow Canadian grain to go out through American transportation systems and American ports. We need a definite answer. I know that officials at the Port of Vancouver, longshoremen, and many others are extremely concerned and worried about it. It would have a tremendous impact upon the Port of Vancouver and would certainly undermine our whole Canadian transportation system. We want to know whether the Bill will override the WGTA and accommodate the people who are trying to take away very important regulations under the Western Grain Transportation Act.

We in Vancouver East also want to know whether the changes to rail regulations will take Canadian goods south of the border to U.S. ports. As I have already said, we believe it will. This trend has already started, and deregulation will facilitate it.

We in Vancouver East and in British Columbia want to know how many jobs will be lost. Many jobs were lost in the United States. We need a feasibility study by the Government and time to do it so that we have some answers. We want to know how the safety of workers will be affected. We want to know whether wages and working conditions will be affected. We need a delay in order to conduct feasibility and impact studies to answer these questions.