

tude of the Free Press towards certain other legislation was ruinous for Western Canada.

Hon. Mr. McMEANS: It has had a change of heart.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: I am opposed to the Bill because I believe it would result in unjustifiable interference with the operations of practical business men. The country does not want that. Out in the West we have experienced interference by theorists, who advised farmers to go where there was no water, and who had some of us supplied with cattle which they later took away from us at one cent a pound. This Bill too, I am afraid, would lead to unprofitable operations by primary producers.

Hon. A. B. GILLIS: Honourable senators, what is happening here is similar to what happened at the meetings of the Railway Committee. We waited from day to day for someone who would come along and speak in support of the Bill, but no support whatever was forthcoming, aside from one or two telegrams that were received from elevator companies.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I confess that all the private interests were against the Bill.

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: Private and public. Every province that was represented there was opposed to it.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: That is another question.

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: I say that every province of Canada which sent representatives to the committee was opposed to the Bill. I did not take a very active part in the committee's proceedings, but I watched them closely, and after listening to the evidence that was given from day to day I came to the conclusion that the Government was standing in its own light in not withdrawing this obnoxious measure. If anyone had come before the committee and supported the Bill there would have been some justification for the Government's continued determination to have it passed.

The Minister of Transport appeared before the committee a number of times. He was very agreeable, I admit, and consented to a good many amendments being made, most of which were more or less trivial; but as to section 4, which is unquestionably the most important feature of the Bill, the Minister took a very strong stand. He said that if we interfered with or amended that section in any way he would withdraw the whole Bill. I think that is a correct version of his statement.

Now, the attempt to regulate lake freight rates is not new. Honourable senators will remember that in 1923—I think that was the year—Parliament passed an Act for regulating and stabilizing lake freight rates. But that proved futile; it did not accomplish anything. Well, I imagine that if this measure is passed it will have the same fate. I do not think there is any possibility of enforcing the provisions of the measure. Why, honourable senators, it would be necessary to have an army of police and patrol steamers patrolling the lakes to prevent constant infringement. Every port on the lakes would have to be manned with police.

As other honourable members have pointed out, the main object of the Bill would appear to be the passing of legislation for assisting the railways. Yet, as the honourable junior senator from Winnipeg (Hon. Mr. Haig) has made clear, this Bill would have no such result. So far as I can see, the only effect of the Bill would be to increase the cost of transporting wheat and other commodities by water to and from the West. In the course of the committee's sittings the remark was made by someone that when wheat got to the head of the lakes it was out of the farmers' hands, and consequently any regulation of lake rates would not affect the price which the farmer receives for his grain. Well, to say the least, I think that is utter nonsense. Everyone knows that the cost of transportation, whether by rail or water, is one of the important factors that have to be considered when the price of grain is being fixed. Consequently if the rate on the Great Lakes is increased it will go hard with the Western Provinces.

I need not, honourable senators, elaborate on the conditions prevailing in the West today. I would not say the outlook is hopeless; on the contrary, I think the country will come back; but during the past few years we have been hard hit. Grasshoppers, drought and other misfortunes beyond human control have very seriously handicapped the people of the West. But last year the farmers on the Prairies suffered a further misfortune: by reason of the Grain Board not being allowed to function they were victimized to the extent of more than \$60,000,000. That statement cannot be denied. If this Bill is enacted an additional burden will be placed upon the shoulders of the struggling farmers of Western Canada.

I was very glad to hear the honourable leader of the House (Hon. Mr. Dandurand) suggest an amendment to exempt the Maritimes from the operation of the Bill. I congratulate them on that concession. The Mari-