

Western Grain Transportation Act

it achieves the same purpose, and what we are after is an enabling provision for the Governor in Council to enter into an agreement with another railway, subject to the terms and conditions which may be outlined.

So, in a preliminary way, I think we can support the Minister on a couple of the items with respect to Motion No. 157, but I think it will require some further discussion.

Mr. Nielsen: We are already making progress. The Hon. Member for Vegreville stipulated that we are prepared to consent to the Minister's proposals with respect to Motion No. 14. For his part, the Minister is prepared to consent to our Motion No. 10 dealing with the definition of "export", and to Motion No. 57 which is the same as Motion No. 156. I would suggest we need not go as far as the Minister has suggested and require the Chair to rule on those three items because if we have the consent of the NDP with respect to the meeting of the minds we have here we can dispose of Motions Nos. 10, 14, 57 and 156 immediately. The Hon. Member has left the door open on Motion No. 157, and I would suggest the Minister and the Hon. Member get together and perhaps an agreement on the wording of that motion might be arrived at, along with a representative of the NDP.

● (1650)

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I had not anticipated that we would begin the negotiation process here on the floor of the House.

Mr. Nielsen: It will save time.

Mr. Deans: It will not save time, unfortunately. To begin, the argument right now is not a matter of determining the question of desirability. At the moment we are arguing whether something is admissible or not within the parliamentary rules.

We can determine later what may be desirable. It may well be that we could think many of our amendments were desirable. If that were to be the criteria used to determine whether they are admissible, I suggest we could cast out the Speaker's ruling and say that we think they are all desirable and then get on with the debate on each of the amendments. However, that is not what we are charged with addressing this afternoon.

We are charged with determining whether certain things are admissible under normal practices and precedents of those normal practices in the House of Commons. I want to deal strictly with that for the time being.

I would contend that the Speaker is correct in her ruling that Motions Nos. 14, 74 and 157 are inadmissible. I would suggest that there are in fact other motions which I would be quite content to concede are inadmissible. I would suggest that they are inadmissible for exactly the reasons set out by the Speaker in the preliminary ruling. Desirable though they may be, they go beyond the scope of the Bill.

In the case of Motions Nos. 157 and 74, they clearly go beyond the concepts as they were debated at second reading and in the committee. Bearing that in mind, if it were to be

decided as a result of some further negotiation that those particular proposals were desirable, we could, of course, come to the Speaker at any time and point out that there is unanimous consent for the inclusion of one or more amendments notwithstanding how the Speaker might rule.

Therefore I would ask that we deal strictly with admissibility on the floor of the House and that we determine the admissibility of the amendments as they stand. I contend that these particular amendments are not admissible. I suggest that we make our submissions on the admissibility of all of the amendments so that the Chair may then make a determination. Once we have seen which are acceptable and which are not, and then which ones may be desirable but not admissible, we then have a procedure to follow subsequent to this one. Through that process we can see which of the Liberal amendments, Conservative amendments and NDP amendments, though technically inadmissible, are desirable and therefore ought to be negotiated into the Bill.

Therefore I say that the Speaker has quite correctly ruled. There is ample precedent, which I will not go into, for ruling that a motion that (a) is not touching upon those matters decided at second reading or not contained in the Bill at the time of approval in principle, and (b) alters the intent of the Bill in such a way as to make it considerably different from the Bill that was given second reading, cannot be accepted on the strict test of admissibility.

Let me use Motion 157 as an example since it touches on all the others. It is entirely new. The only thing which has not changed is the number in the Bill. Beyond that, the wording is entirely different and the intent is entirely different. It is not an intent that was debated in the House at any other time nor is it an intent that could legitimately be placed before the committee for discussion. Quite clearly, it is not a matter that has been ruled on within the context of the principle of the Bill. Therefore I would suggest to the Speaker that, notwithstanding the good intentions of my two colleagues, I would find it quite unacceptable simply to make decisions on whether something is good or bad at this time. I suggest, rather, that we make decisions on admissibility, and I would contend that those matters are inadmissible.

While I have the floor, I ask that we look at a matter which I believe will assist us in determining the admissibility of certain amendments. Earlier today, the question arose as to the definition of the Bill. While I do not want to deal with that at the moment, I would like to deal with a question raised by the Speaker. When discussing the Bill earlier, the Speaker indicated that the intent of the Bill was to change the Crownsnest Pass freight rate. I believe that is a reasonable paraphrasing of the Speaker's words. However, that is not what the Bill says, and that is, of course, a major bone of contention in dealing with many of the amendments now being presented. If the intent of the Bill is indeed to change the Crownsnest Pass freight rate, then certain of the amendments might clearly be argued to be in order.

However, the Speaker will recall that at the time of the second reading debate and subsequently when we argued that