

National Transportation Act, 1986

a great move forward in the history of transportation in this country. When people look back in 15 or 20 years they will say that the Deputy Prime Minister, who initiated this, and the people who supported it did a great job for Canada and that is has worked well.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet), on a point of order.

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, as the Official Opposition Critic, I would normally have the right to speak now for an unlimited period. However, as many Members of this House are aware, we are celebrating a very important anniversary today, that of the Hon. Member for Regina West, (Mr. Benjamin), who has now been sitting in Parliament for nineteen years. There is a reception the Hon. Member will have to attend very shortly, and with the consent of the House, I would like to give him the opportunity to speak now, without of course waiving my right to speak subsequently, for an unlimited period.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Papineau for allowing me to speak now. I also thank government Members for agreeing that the Hon. Member for Papineau retain his right to the time he is allowed under the rules as the second speaker even though he is speaking third.

For some two years now we have been engaged with the issue of deregulation. We started with a paper called *Freedom to Move* in the summer of 1985 and we are now in the summer of 1987. I want to say at the outset that as far as we are concerned, there is a three-part package being put together: Deregulation, privatization, and free trade. They are all inextricably linked. That is why the Government, as well as the previous Government, is and was in such a hurry to try to deregulate, privatize, and what-have-you. It has little or nothing to do with the welfare and good order of Canada and her people. It has to do with pacifying and satisfying the United States on things it does not like about the way we do things in Canada.

The U.S. does not like our freight rate programs. It does not like the Maritime Freight Assistance Act, the Atlantic Provinces' Freight Assistance Act, or the Western Grain Transportation Act. That Act in itself was a betrayal of the Crowsnest Pass rate. The U.S. does not like our marketing boards, including the Canadian Wheat Board. These efforts to deregulate and privatize are essentially to satisfy American complaints about the way we do things because the Government is desperate to get a free trade agreement. I submit that that is the main agenda behind this Bill and others like it.

• (1810)

The Americans do not like compulsory public medical care plans. They do not like the Canada Pension Plan or our unemployment insurance plan. They say that our fishermen are subsidized because they are eligible for UIC. I do not give a damn whether they like it or not.

Mr. Crosbie: Neither do we.

Mr. Benjamin: Yeah, it sounds like it. It looks like it. If I have ever seen an example of supine acquiescence, grovelling, and crawling on hands and knees to Washington, it is the Government, which is even worse than the previous one.

Mr. Crosbie: Bunk. Absolute bunk.

Mr. Murphy: Okay, you are just as bad.

Mr. Benjamin: The United States' conditions for a free trade deal mean that they will demand things of Canada which will be a direct interference with our sovereignty and independence. This Bill is one of them. The attitude over there is to do anything to make a buck. They will go to any length on an ideological binge that competition and free market forces will be the end-all and be-all. The Tories are working hard to prove that Karl Marx was right that capitalism and free enterprise will destroy itself.

There is a perfectly good reason why there are rules and regulations in Canada and in the United States about cartels and monopolies. There are regulations to control stock markets, corporations, et cetera, because when the market is open wide to a free enterprise jungle it becomes dog-eat-dog, what's in it for me, to hell with everybody else, and I don't care what happens to my country as long as I can make a buck. That is the attitude behind this Bill and others like it.

I for one, Mr. Speaker, do not want to be party to the kind of thing which makes us nothing more than a fifty-first state, a groveller and sniveller to Washington.

Mr. Crosbie: Such trash. We don't grovel or snivel to anyone. I don't. I certainly am not going to grovel or snivel to that kind of talk.

Mr. Benjamin: You have been doing that for a long time.

Mr. Crosbie: Cut it out and get to the Bill.

Mr. Benjamin: This attempt to—

Mr. Crosbie: That's political garbage.

Mr. Benjamin: The hon. gentleman talks about competition and the market forces. How has it been working so far?

Mr. Murphy: The Minister is leaving.

Mr. Benjamin: He has not been around for most of the Bill anyway so it does not matter. I wish we would get a Minister who is interested in it.