

take into account concepts of sharing. It fails to take into account the fact that that investment must serve the public purpose in the sense of providing service to all communities. For example, if the philosophy behind this legislation was used to run the transit system in Ottawa or the transit system in Winnipeg where I come from, there is no way that transit services could be provided to suburban communities. One must realize that the market value of transportation services within the core, the price per ticket that an individual rider of the transit system should pay, is infinitesimally smaller than that which a suburban user should pay. It only shows that investment must be used to provide service, and if it is real investment it will pay for itself. The purpose of investment, even that which pays for itself, is to provide service for all the community. We must realize that in many situations the rich part of the system has to subsidize the poorer part of it so that all can benefit.

• (1210)

Investment must serve social justice. In this case we call upon the Government to make sure that this investment in railways serves social justice as it affects farmers and not just the private interests of the railway magnates.

It is not only in the case of farmers that investment coming from railways must serve social justice; it must also serve the urban communities in the country. I think of my own community of Winnipeg. If there is to be an enormous investment in railways as the Government has suggested, then I should like to know what plans it has to invest in the relocation of the massive railway yards in the City of Winnipeg out of the City.

I want to know that for several reasons. First of all, if the railway yards are not removed from the centre of the City, they will continue to have a detrimental impact on the neighbourhoods in which the poorest of our citizens live. Very expensive bridges will have to be built which will cut up the inner city neighbourhoods and thus wreak further social injustice. This is not acceptable. Investment must serve social justice, not simply private interests and private property.

Hon. John Wise (Elgin): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to make a few comments on Bill C-155 in the brief time allotted to me and also the opportunity to support the amendment which would provide a six-month hoist.

Given the magnitude of the issue before us today and the concerns and problems associated with it, I am sure that everyone, with the exception of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), would agree that it is impossible to deal adequately, from almost any point of view, with any aspect of the Bill.

I want to take the opportunity as well, as some of my colleagues have already, to draw the attention of Members of the House and a good number of people outside the House who have been following the debate closely to the excellent, well-considered and logical response to the introduction of the Bill by my seatmate and colleague, the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski).

Western Grain Transportation Act

There has been much mention throughout the debate of the historical significance of this type of legislation and I agree with those statements. I have the distinct feeling, however, that Canadians generally—even some Canadians in western Canada but more particularly in central Canada and in my Province of Ontario and to a lesser extent in Atlantic Canada—are unaware of the significance of the legislation. I do not think it is an overstatement to say that the debate has the same significance and is as important as the constitutional debate and the debate on the National Energy Program. The result of this legislation, if it is not properly amended, will be as disastrous for the nation and the individual Canadian as that national energy policy.

The Bill was introduced on May 10; second reading debate began on May 12. We argued that the two-day interval was not enough for an adequate study of the Bill and the preparation of a response to it. On May 16 the Minister of Agriculture—not the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin)—indicated that he would move closure on second reading debate. The Government had allowed only 10 hours and 50 minutes of debate at that time, although I believe there has been another day of debate since. Until that time only a handful of the 48 Opposition Members from the three prairie Provinces had spoken, although they represent the people most directly affected by the Bill. A lesser opportunity was provided to those of us from other areas of the country.

I do not profess to be an expert on this legislation, Mr. Speaker. We have gone through four stages in the Crown debate in the last year or so. We have had the Gilson report, the Pepin proposals, the introduction of Bill C-155, and finally changes were made to the Bill. Those changes made at each step of the process were never fully explained or rationalized, however. It is no wonder, then, that there is such widespread discontent and dissatisfaction with the legislation.

The original proposal of the Minister of Transport was screened by his caucus colleagues. It is an offence to Parliament that Members of the Government caucus had an opportunity to examine the legislation and make substantive changes, whereas Members of the Opposition were told that their opportunity to discuss it at second reading would be cut off. It is obvious that a dual standard has been applied to the debate.

It is even more offensive that those Members who will be prevented from debating the Bill represent the people most directly affected by it. Parliament is supposed to represent the people, so the people's representatives must be given every opportunity to speak and to be heard.

I also find it interesting, but not surprising, that it was the Minister of Agriculture and not the Minister of Transport who announced the likelihood of closure, or the application of Standing Order 75C to the Bill. The Minister of Transport was available in the House at that time and had just finished answering the questions minutes before. But it was left to the Minister of Agriculture to introduce the motion because the