

We should be looking at ways to increase efficiency. From 1977 to 1980 St. Lawrence Seaway tolls have increased by 100 per cent, 28 per cent in the last two years, the six and five guidelines notwithstanding. These are direct costs to the producer. Even though this affects grain shipped through the Lakehead, the fact is that because of the pooling system it diminishes the price received by the producer. We can bring forward, and I suggest we tried, constructive suggestions to this unfortunate Bill to try and demonstrate that we at least are trying to improve as much as possible this very badly thought out and unfortunate legislation.

I see my time has expired, Mr. Speaker, but I wanted to make a strong representation on behalf of the people in my area concerning some of the realities in western Canada today.

**Mr. Lyle S. Kristiansen (Kootenay West):** Mr. Speaker, in commenting on Motion No. 34 standing in the name of the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin), the Transport critic for the NDP, I would comment first of all in response to the question raised by the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn) who has just concluded his remarks. He said he was unclear as to the purpose of the amendment now before us, although he says he listened with care. The reason is very obvious. The NDP wants the best service possible for the least possible money, and rail, not roads, is the way to get it.

That is the object of our amendment and I would have thought that, if the Hon. Member was listening with anything like the degree of care he suggested, this should have been obvious even to a Conservative. The Hon. Member for Saskatoon West had some good facts but, as usual, he, as a Conservative, drew the wrong conclusions from them. Judging by the substance, as opposed to the form, of his comments, at least those made before lunch, with regard to the situation facing the community of Arelee, Saskatchewan, it appears that he drew his base information from a recent fourpart series in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* by a Mr. John Gallagher. I would say that the Hon. Member is to be congratulated for his source. Mr. Gallagher is, after all, a research assistant to the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin), the Transport critic for our Party and our key spokesman on all of the matters relating to the Crow rate. Mr. Gallagher is also the author of "To Kill the Crow", one of the best, definitive studies of that entire issue currently available to the people of Canada. However, we in the New Democratic Party do wish that if the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West wants to use our material, although he is very welcome, he would read and use it all rather than just selected parts of it.

● (1510)

The Hon. Member for Saskatoon West, in reference to the Arelee line, suggested that trucking would save money as compared to using the railway. For his edification, I should like, in correcting his error, to quote the segment of the *Star-Phoenix* series that he either failed to read in full or failed to understand. I quote from the third article in the

### *Western Grain Transportation Act*

four-part series entitled "Few Savings in Abandonment". This article of very recent vintage states:

We have seen how, abandoning the CPR line through Arelee, Struan and Sonningdale will about double the cost of shipping grain to area farmers and how highway costs will increase because of greater truck traffic. It remains to be seen whether or not abandonment will increase total transportation costs, but it is a distinct possibility.

The 1981 hearings that confirmed the abandonment of the line concluded the CPR had expenses in 1979 of \$447,219 on the 29.2 miles of line while grain shipped from it generated \$137,181 in revenues to the company for an "actual loss" of \$310,038. This does not take into account the branch line subsidy paid to the company by the federal government.

According to the Canadian Wheat Board, 236 farmers designated the three stations on the line as their primary delivery point in 1981. Assuming they ship the provincial average of 7,254.3 bushels of wheat the average extra distance of 20 miles, according to the University of Regina study, then the increased cost to them will be \$213,816.

In other words the CPR, by abandoning that line, has transferred \$213,816 of the cost of transporting that grain from itself to the farmers. The net gain to the railroad, however, is the full \$447,219, since it will still receive the same payment to move the grain to export position from the alternate delivery points.

The CPR gains; the farmer loses.

And the public loses too.

Working from the same averages, it would require 1,863 semi-trailers loaded to a gross weight of 72,000 pounds to move the grain from this line 20 miles for delivery.

As noted previously, construction and maintenance costs for a road surface vary directly with the number and weight of axle loadings.

Every semi-trailer that moves over asphalt concrete highway would cost the taxpayer between 52 cents and \$1.11 per mile in construction and maintenance costs according to the Iowa Department of Transportation formula.

Each mile over gravel roads would cost the taxpayers about 84 cents in maintenance costs according to a formula published by the Transportation Agency of Saskatchewan.

On intermediate paved highways, the first four semi-trailer loads per day each way would add about \$1,250 per mile to the annual maintenance costs, or \$1.25 per truck mile. And these figures presume there is no other truck traffic contributing to traffic volumes greater than the structural capacity of the highways.

Maintenance figures like that make continued repair of intermediate pavement uneconomic and it is necessary to rebuild and upgrade. That means costs between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per mile in 1980 dollars, according to the TAS, depending upon what standard the highway has to be built to.

The CPR estimated it would cost \$4,078,203 to bring this line up to standard, but it did not include the revenues the company would receive from salvage during upgrading.

But highway 376, which runs alongside the railroad from Sonningdale to Asquith, is topped with intermediate pavement. To bring it up to the structural capacity needed to move the grain produced in the area would cost \$8,470,000 in 1982 dollars, more than double the cost of upgrading the rail line.

Again, I wish that the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West and other speakers for the Conservative Party, who say they cannot understand, would read a little more fully the documents from which they derive their information and opinions and would listen a little more carefully when we submit and clearly state, time and time again, that our objective, both in this amendment and others that we are placing before the House of Commons on this whole issue, is to get the best results for the people of Canada for the least possible dollars. That makes sense to us. It may not make sense to a Conservative, and judging by all of their past performance it certainly does not make sense to Liberals. However, to us, ordinary people who represent ordinary people, it just happens to make