

*Department of Transport Act*

farmers are having in western Canada, spearheaded by their own elevator company, the Saskatchewan pool, in encouraging the government to introduce a system whereby they would be allowed the privilege of delivering grain to the elevator of their own choice.

In the course of the debate in the committee it was pointed out that that would be a fairly comprehensive job if it were assumed by the transport controller. At one point in the questioning relating to that same task, I asked Mr. Milner this question, as recorded at page 243 of the committee proceedings:

I understand you keep a very close liaison with the Canadian wheat board. I do not see why, if a separate individual were transport controller, this same close liaison could not be held with the board of grain commissioners. Perhaps he could be allotted these duties, these functions, and as Mr. Studer pointed out, that closer checking on individual points could be carried out by him. Is that feasible?

Mr. Milner: I am not going to give a snap answer to a question which is as involved as that. I do think to the extent that you increased your checking on matters of that kind, naturally the effect would likely be beneficial.

Mr. Johnson (Kindersley): It might be desirable for you to have additional staff?

Mr. Milner: No.

Mr. Milner has stated that although it is a part-time job and he receives no salary from the Department of Transport, but only as a member of the board of grain commissioners, he has sufficient time to handle the numerous duties which confront him as transport controller in trying to cope with a record crop in western Canada. The resolution which is before us outlines the fact that there can be the appointment of one or more controllers and one or more deputy controllers to carry out the provisions of such regulations, and provision is made for the payment of their remuneration. I therefore see no reason why the duties of the transport controller could not be enlarged to include those granted him by statute so that the powers could be taken in to provide this service to the farmers of western Canada through the equitable allocation of box cars, and consideration could be given to the principle of delivering grain to the elevator of their choice.

I was rather disturbed at the fact that there did not seem to be anyone here to do Mr. Milner's job in his absence. It seems to me that as a member of the board of grain commissioners he is quite busy in the summer months and he therefore takes his vacation, to which he is fully entitled, in the winter months. I therefore put a question on the order paper in which I asked who assumed the responsibility of the transport controller during his absence. I was thinking about the month of January in particular

[Mr. Johnson (Kindersley).]

when we have a variation of from 50 to 100 million bushels of available space in the elevators.

The first question I asked reads as follows:

1. Who is the deputy transport controller?

The second, third and fourth questions were as follows:

2. When was he or she appointed?

3. Under what authority was the appointment made and who made the appointment?

4. What is the salary of the deputy transport controller?

The first, second and third questions were answered simultaneously as follows:

1, 2, and 3. No deputy transport controller has been appointed since the resignation of the former deputy transport controller was accepted on July 2, 1953. Mr. Frank T. Rowan has been performing the duties of deputy transport controller since August 1, 1953.

It does not answer question No. 3 which reads:

Under what authority was the appointment made and who made the appointment?

I presume the minister will be able to give me that information during the course of the discussion on this resolution. The answer to No. 4 was as follows:

Mr. Rowan receives no salary for his work in connection with transport control but is remunerated as an official of the Canadian wheat board.

It is apparent that the Minister of Transport is reluctant to spend any money. The department tries to get someone to fill these part-time jobs as they can find them. That answer rather conflicts with the answer the hon. member for Assiniboia received in the agriculture and colonization committee, and I quote from page 239 of the proceedings as follows:

Mr. Argue: How many full-time employees operate under this act?

Mr. Milner: How many full-time employees?

Mr. Argue: Yes.

Mr. Milner: There is Dan Kane on the west coast and a stenographer, and there is my secretary in Ottawa here and myself.

Where does the deputy transport controller come from? He popped up in the answer to my question, but I am suspicious that the functions of the transport controller are being carried on in part by his efficient secretary who works over in the Hunter building. It might well be that that could be done because I assume that under these tremendous powers which are granted to the transport controller to organize our bulk transport, to look after the filling of ships and so on, directives would be issued. On February 24 I asked:

How many directives to the railways were issued by the transport controller—

The answer came back "None". In other words, the transport controller operates on