

Western Grain Transportation Act

electricity supplied to Pine Point Mines; the Hon. Member for Dauphin-Swan River (Mr. Lewycky)—Canadian Transport Commission—Rulings on railway branch line abandonments in Manitoba. (b) Request for protection of subdivisions.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I also have to deliver a ruling related to a point of order raised this morning by the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans).

The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain rose this morning on the point of order suggesting that Bill C-155 was improperly before the House because, he submits, it has three separate and distinct principles. He also suggests that the Bill should therefore be divided. I will address simply and only the point of order relating to the amendment.

The Chair stated that the question before the House was an amendment that the Bill be not now read a second time this day but six months hence. The Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain submitted that the House should not proceed further with the amendment until his point of order has been addressed and ruled upon.

After further consideration, the Chair finds that the amendment before the House must just be disposed of either by being adopted, negatived or withdrawn, before any discussion is entertained on a point of order relating to the main motion for second reading and referral to committee. The Chair recognizes that if the amendment is carried, the Bill may be rejected but it is not for the Chair to judge the consequences of the decisions of the House but rather to ensure that the proper procedures are followed. In this case, an amendment is properly before the House and a discussion on the Member's point of order can only be entertained once the amendment has been disposed of.

* * *

WESTERN GRAIN TRANSPORTATION ACT**MEASURE TO ESTABLISH**

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Pepin that Bill C-155, an Act to facilitate the transportation, shipping and handling of western grain and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof, be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport; and the amendment thereto of Mr. Benjamin (p. 25389).

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to the amendment which, of course, is a six-month hoist. Most Hon. Members have not addressed themselves to the amendment before us but have talked about many subjects.

I appreciate the situation of the Hon. Member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Clark) who, of course, was giving his maiden speech. He followed the usual proprieties and talked about many other things instead of addressing the substance of the Bill. I can understand the situation of my colleague, the Hon. Member for Spadina (Mr. Heap), who represents an urban riding. He naturally would want to address certain concerns and explain the relevance of the legislation before us to his community.

I have also heard some very good speeches on the subject. Many Members have dealt with important points. The question before us is one of process. Our amendment is to delay the discussion of this Bill in the House for six months. There are very good reasons for this. The legislation before us is extremely bad legislation and the ordinary procedures of discussion before a committee hearing representations are really not as good as some other procedures of going back to the drawing board in a more fundamental way.

• (1640)

We are extremely concerned with the way the Government has proceeded on this question. People were given assurances that there would be no change in the Crow rate without consensus, but now the Government is trying to ram through something without consensus. That is a clear violation of trust. It is inexcusable and we have to protest in no uncertain terms. Frankly, the Government has reneged on its promises. We want to bring this to the attention of all Canadians and make the Government live up to the promise with which it initially came to the people. We are optimistic that some kind of suitable arrangements can be made and that good will can prevail if people would get together and negotiate in good faith.

The issues before us are extremely complex. That is another reason for taking a sober six-month look at the problem. The problem has been with us for a long time, and six months is a very modest time in which to try to deal in a realistic fashion with it.

Let me refer to some of the problems with which the legislation has to deal. One is transportation. Clearly this is a transportation Bill, but we have to put it in a broader context. We are dealing with transportation by railways but we have to think of transportation by highways and competing transportation in that field and we have to think of ports and of subsidy policies. These are extremely complex matters.

What about jobs? Certainly there is provision in this legislation to create jobs. But is this Bill going to do that in the best way possible? How will these jobs be distributed? This is an extremely important question with the rate of unemployment that we have now. We have to consider urban jobs as well as jobs in steel manufacturing and in farming. There is the situation of the family farm.

Some provisions of this legislation are very harmful, so we get down to very basic principles as to what kind of society we