

### Interprovincial Trade

happened in the past and look at our discussions and negotiations with the provinces, and that does not necessarily always mean good or positive things—I could speak longer on this subject. If we take another example, such as transport which was mentioned earlier, the rules change from province to province. This is illogical, Mr. Speaker. However, I understand that the provinces have agreed to discuss the matter and to try to improve our economy and our society for the good of Canada.

● (1740)

[English]

It is time for each of us in the House of Commons, regardless of Party, to look at this question because it is important to Canadians. It is important that we can negotiate between provinces. Interprovincial trade is important to the Dene band in Hay River, to the people on the Gaspé, to the people in the west, to the people of British Columbia, to the people of the Maritimes and to the people of Nova Scotia. The secret to our success is working together as good Canadian citizens.

**Mr. Chuck Cook (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, I am more than delighted to have an opportunity to speak to this particular motion. I will vote for it if it does come to a vote because it is a move in the right direction. I am a western Canadian. In fact, I come from the far west. I have watched what has been happening in this country for a lifetime. The fact that central Canada is so favoured by freight rates quite frankly appals me.

We in Canada talk about unity. We talk about the country being unified and about all of us working together. That should include everyone. I have several examples of inequities I would like to cite.

A farmer with a farm in Saskatchewan and an egg ranch in Alberta was not allowed by the Canadian Wheat Board to move his own grain from Saskatchewan to Alberta to feed his own chickens. Is that free trade? Flour mills basically no longer exist in western Canada because it is much cheaper to ship grain to eastern flour mills than it is to ship flour. There is nothing fair about that whatsoever. The rate on flour should be the same both ways. Freight rates must be part of the issue of free trade. That an egg farm in the Northwest Territories cannot ship eggs anywhere in Canada it can compete I find offensive as well.

Let us talk about marketing boards for a moment. They have been mentioned and looked on with favour by some of my political opponents. Why is there no one who speaks for the consumers? Quite frankly, marketing boards increase the cost of everything to consumers and I defy any marketing board to deny that statement. In effect, marketing boards subsidize the inefficient producer. That was the case with egg marketing, milk marketing and many other areas in my Province of British Columbia. I am against them. They achieve nothing except to subsidize the inefficient.

● (1750)

My home in Vancouver is within an hour's drive of the City of Bellingham, Washington. The difference in prices between those two cities is intolerable in many respects. I will give you one concrete example dating from a few years ago when I became interested in the issue. A major manufacturer of paper products, Westminster Paper Products, is located in New Westminster, British Columbia. The paper towels they manufacture can be bought in Bellingham, Washington, for something like 40 per cent less than in Vancouver. They are manufactured in my city yet they charge me more than they do 50 miles away in Bellingham, Washington.

I inquired as to why. The reason was very simple, they said. In order to have a Canadian market they add the freight rates on in Canada, equalize the price, and sell the product for exactly the same in Toronto as they do in Vancouver and other regions of the country. Of course, export sales are a different matter. That is all very good except for one thing. If you were buying an automobile in Ontario at that time it was \$300 less than it would cost in Vancouver. It suddenly occurred to me that there is something manifestly unfair about that because if our manufacturers equalize their rates and charge the same price across the country, why are we paying that extra amount in Vancouver? Perhaps General Motors should equalize its rates and allow those who buy cars in Ontario next to the factory to subsidize those who are further away. Yet that does not happen. There are many examples of this kind of thing where free trade does not truly exist in Canada.

Another small example. Why can we ship our cattle to eastern feedlots at a very low freight rate, yet if we want to ship dressed beef from our own feedlots in refrigerated cars to eastern Canada the freight rate makes it almost impossible to do so? We are talking about free trade now so let us talk about free trade and economic freedom for the west. Rail freight rates are a major issue in that respect. For years and years and years in the City of Kamloops, about 160 miles into the interior from Vancouver, if you wanted to ship two-by-fours to eastern Canada the freight rate was structured in such a way that it was cheaper to ship the lumber all the way to Vancouver and then turn around and ship it to eastern Canada. Kamloops did not get the benefit of the lower rate directly.

If we want this country to work, if we want to discuss free trade with any intelligence at all, we have to look very closely at not only federal but provincial marketing boards. Who do they really help? Believe me, they do not help the consumer and it is about time we stopped using marketing boards to subsidize inefficient producers who should not be in the business at all because they do not know what they are doing. As long as we allow them to exist, no one is looking after the consumer's interests. As someone who represents consumers, I would certainly like to see a lot more protection for them.

Let us turn now to the alcohol business. I do not think there is any doubt at all that if there had not been provincial protection across this country, there would be very few breweries in Canada. In any event, all of them would be