

done in regard to the tariffs for preferred movements until some federal-provincial agency is set up to assess the implications of any changes in such movements in and out of selected territories. Following that assessment the agency could then determine on a selective basis what to take from here and give there.

I think this is a real step forward and meets any objection that might be taken by those in the east because it removes the blanket subsidy principle and substitutes assistance that is granted on a selective basis.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Badanai):** Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired, unless he has the unanimous consent of the committee to continue.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Mr. Chairman, I should just like to make one additional point in conclusion before I move on to deal with some of the other clauses about which I should like more details. I thank the members of the committee for granting me their indulgence in order that I may continue.

Even those who come from the east find that this is a pretty complicated and involved subject. For example, reference must be had to three or four different acts in order to get the full impact of the provisions contained in clauses 5 and 6. The leaders of the four provinces directly affected by the provisions of the bill have stated they are in favour of drastic change. They want the blanket subsidy principle rescinded because it has been found wanting in certain areas. They now want selective assistance given to the truckers and the railways, with no discrimination.

I should like to see us carry out the principle enshrined within the National Transportation Act that we passed in the last parliament. The Atlantic premiers start in, as it were, not backside to, but I think frontside front, by saying that the government should set up an agency, certainly something far more substantial than the committee referred to by the minister in his remarks on Tuesday, which to me could be a most flexible arrangement, a body not cemented in any legislation, and certainly not in this legislation.

The Atlantic premiers asked for a comprehensive transportation policy. They want a federal government agency to look after the peculiar problems of transportation in the Atlantic region and to co-ordinate its activities with representatives of the provinces.

#### *Atlantic Regional Freight Assistance Act*

Change is required. The blanket subsidy principle has created problems. However, before any change is made, let us assess the effect of such change on the business communities in the area, and, if beneficial, then grant selective assistance.

● (10:50 a.m.)

The minister says that he will not move in certain areas until the committee makes certain recommendations. I point out that the committee has nothing concrete before it. There is nothing firm about this bill; it does not lay any foundations. Since clause 5(1) is an interim measure which may not come into effect unless certain other regulations are proclaimed after a period of nine months, I question the wisdom of including it in the bill.

Surely the minister is now in a position to act on the useful and constructive committee report that was agreed to unanimously by all committee members and tabled in the house on Tuesday. That report contains the basis for transportation policy, I submit. A similar report has been in the hands of the minister or of departmental officials for many months. I say that you do not need clause 5. The government's attempt to change articles 31 and 32 of the contract, as a result of which the maritime provinces entered into union with the rest of Canada, is analogous to the former attempt it made to change the Crow's-nest Pass agreement by order in council.

Surely no one can argue that articles 31 and 32 can be varied, affected or altered by order in council. That being so I do not understand the necessity for this interim measure. If the minister wants the wide powers ostensibly contained in clause 5(1), why does he not take the burr off his backside and bring in a comprehensive transportation bill in the fall. This bill will be sent to committee and, frankly, I am worried in case we shall have committed this concept to death. The minister has the committee's recommendations; they are comprehensive. I should like to see some guarantee that we shall see a comprehensive bill covering this question in the fall.

I will not take up any more of the time of the house, except to say that I do not think the bill goes far enough in removing the existing discrimination between rail and truck forms of transportation. I agree that some assistance will be given to truckers. My real objection to the bill is that it completely undermines the transportation charter we were given under the Maritime Freight Rates