

If that does not cover everything I do not know what it does cover. It covers studies. That part of clause 15 permits the commission to have its economists get their own figures on the cost of moving grain. If the railways can consistently show they are losing on this movement, once they have modernized their equipment and so on, we in western Canada will be willing to accept that. But we are not willing to accept it as things are, and clause 329 suggests by implication that the rest of the Canadian people pay a subsidy to us. We reject that entirely.

I hope the minister will take another look at new section 329 which is redundant because clause 15, paragraphs (b) and (c), provides for certain studies to be undertaken. Why does the minister object? Under clause 15 the commission has authority to make studies. Why does he single out the Crowsnest pass rates? Why does he try to break an inviolable contract.

Last night the hon. member for Mackenzie said that we feel strongly about this contract. The minister knows that. We would move more quickly if the minister would withdraw this part of the bill and go on with the rest of it. Why does he have this provision in the bill? It becomes verbiage when one considers clause 15. The minister talked of faith. I suggest to the minister that he ought to have faith in his own bill and, if clause 15 means something, he ought to withdraw that part of clause 50 to which I object for the reasons I have outlined.

● (6:10 p.m.)

Before accepting the wording of the MacPherson commission report in its entirety the minister should read the divergent opinion expressed by Mr. Gobeil. This is important to us in western Canada. We are willing that individual studies should be carried out, preferably on the quiet so that the railways do not know about it and throw in a confusion of figures and talk about ton-miles when they do not mean anything. As to an economic study, fine and dandy; we are ready to stand up to that. But a public inquiry is another matter. None of them so far has produced an accurate assessment of the cost of moving grain. The Turgeon Commission did not do so. The MacPherson Commission certainly failed to do so, as the majority report admits. There were four different sets of figures. The minister would shorten this debate if he would remove clause 50 and have faith in clause 15 because clause 15 gives the board power to undertake all that he wants to do.

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Transportation

The Deputy Chairman: Before I hear from the hon. member for Moose Jaw-Lake Centre may I ask the indulgence of the committee in order that I may make an announcement concerning the adjournment proceedings at ten o'clock tonight?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

The Chairman: It is my duty, pursuant to standing order 39A, to inform the house that the questions to be raised on the adjournment motion tonight are as follows: the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire), Shipping—Winter navigation on the St. Lawrence; the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Allard), Administration of Justice—Petition of Louis Sicotte for a review of his two trials; the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge), Canadian Centennial—Trail, B.C.—Request for stop-over by centennial train.

[*English*]

Mr. Pascoe: Mr. Chairman, I was waiting to see whether the minister would rise, accept the suggestion made by the last speaker and withdraw this clause, in which case it would have been unnecessary for me to speak again in this debate and emphasize the necessity to preserve the Crowsnest pass rates intact.

I have spoken briefly on this subject on an earlier occasion. Last night I was in agreement with the minister to a certain extent when he indicated that the commission would use its own figures when deciding how much revenue was received from the transportation of grain for export. This evening I feel I am bound to add a few words to what I have said. As a western member I can do no less in defence of the complete maintenance of the statutory provisions governing the Crowsnest pass rates which were established in 1897. The minister must accept some responsibility for my speaking again on this subject because I got the impression from his remarks last night when he addressed the committee that he considered the revenue from hauling grain to be insufficient and that there would be need for a subsidy. We in the west feel that the payment of a subsidy would be the thin edge of the wedge leading to the removal in the end of the statutory grain rate.

Our position is that the revenue derived from hauling grain is compensatory, that it sufficiently repays the railways for hauling this freight. I will try to prove, to my own satisfaction at least, that the revenues in this