

Mr. Speaker, that there is not a consensus in western Canada, certainly not for the proposals outlined in this Bill. There is no support from any corner of the agricultural community or any agricultural organization. The grain producers do not support it. The livestock producers do not support it. The commodity producers do not support it. Every farm organization has found fault with this Bill.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the livestock and commodity groups have really been sucked in by this Government. They too were betrayed. They worked toward developing a realistic and comprehensive approach which would serve the broader interests of agriculture in western Canada, and the Government pulled the rug out from under them. So the Government really has no friends and no support out there whatsoever. I repeat, there is no consensus that this Bill should be proceeded with, yet the Government is hell-bent on forging ahead.

Let us look at the history. After two days' debate on second reading, the Government moved time allocation. In the committee stage it put on an artificial time limit. We worked day and night—it was the most rigorous exercise committee Members have ever gone through. Here we have an opportunity to debate some of the positive alternatives advanced by our Party, and that is being denied. What is so sad is that we are dealing here with a western issue, one which affects the lives of every person who lives in western Canada. It is more than simply a freight rate issue. It goes to the very economic and social fabric of western Canada. And here we have a Government with no membership in the House from rural western Canada. This issue is really being resolved by a centrally dominated Government. I say to you, Sir, that it is only going to cause further alienation, division and disharmony, and it will increase the strains on Confederation.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, how much more can this country stand? We have gone through a number of very, very contentious and controversial issues. But nothing has been handled with the callous contempt with which the Government has handled this issue. It surely has a blatant disregard for western Canada. Rather than working toward a solution, the Government decided to use force. We have offered a proposal which would ensure the retention of the existing statutory rate until the review process is completed. The Government obviously has some misgivings about this legislation, but it insists on forging ahead. We said, "Back off, wait a little while, do your analysis before you strangle the producers of western Canada with these enormous increases in freight rates". But no, it decided to move.

Members opposite suggest they are acting in the best interests of the country because they are being stubborn. If this Government believes that through stubbornness it is demonstrating strength, I can tell you that we view it somewhat differently in western Canada. If the Government believes it is demonstrating leadership through confrontation, I can tell you as well that we view that in another context. It is that kind of stubbornness and confrontation which has divided our country and destroyed our economy. We have seen it in the Constitution, in the National Energy Program and now we see it in the

Crow. Those are three areas in which the Government has engaged singularly in an all-out attack on western Canada.

I repeat, Mr. Speaker, that we in our Party have tried to work toward a positive and satisfactory solution. We have opposed and we have proposed. We have offered alternatives. We have listened to the evidence before the committee, listened to farm groups and we have offered alternative proposals. We did it in committee and again in the House. But we are very saddened by the fact that we have not been able to debate the alternative proposals we believe would go a long way toward improving this Bill. We have not even had a chance to debate the Government's own amendments in committee or in the House. Moving closure before the Government has a chance to debate its own amendments is to me, totally ridiculous and incomprehensible. We can only conclude, Sir, that it does not have the necessary confidence to defend its own proposals. Members opposite do not have any confidence in this Bill because they know it cannot withstand the critical test of debate. If the Government is so skittish and paranoid about this issue, why does it not go to the people and call an election?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, my suggestion is that rather than this Government's moving closure it should dissolve the House and call an election and let the people decide. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen):

That the Orders of the Day be now read.

Mr. Evans: That is out of order.

Mr. Nielsen: It is not. Mr. Speaker, if there is any—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Is the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) rising on a point of order?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker if there is any doubt in the mind of the Chair as to the acceptability and regularity of that motion, I would like to speak to it before any ruling is made.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): The Chair finds the motion in order. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): All those in favour of the motion, will please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): All those opposed, will please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.