

Western Grain Transportation Act

Canadian Pacific Railways or Canadian Pacific Investments or Canadian Pacific Enterprises or any of its many corporations. They are much too large and too many for me to list them all tonight. The Canadian Pacific, Mr. Speaker, is not only into the transportation business, as has been indicated by one of my colleagues. It is not only in the rail business. It is in the air business, and shipping, and probably in bus transportation. It is in real estate, in mines, in forest products. It is in every field in which it can make money.

An Hon. Member: Good.

Mr. Orlikow: Precisely. That is good. That is what it is in business for. No one faults the railways for that. However, when the people of Canada help that company—or any other company—make money they are entitled to receive a return. How did the Canadian Pacific become the largest corporation in Canada? Did it become the largest corporation because investors put their own money in? No, of course not. It became the largest corporation because the Government of the day, 100 years ago or more, believed, quite properly, that without a transcontinental railway, there would be no country. Therefore, beginning with the Conservative Government under Sir John A. Macdonald, and continuing ever since, Liberal and Conservative Governments have given to the CPR cash grants, loan guarantees, hundreds of millions of dollars, and millions of acres of land. Way back, Mr. Speaker, in 1917 a Royal Commission on Railways and Transportation estimated that the CPR had received the following public assistance as of 1916—almost 70 years ago: Railroad and surveys completed by the Government, \$37.8 million; cash aid, \$66.9 million; value of land, \$119 million; return from land sold minus the cost of improvement, \$55 million; a total way back then, Mr. Speaker, of \$279.5 million.

Those grants to the CPR—and there have been many since then—have made the CPR the largest corporation in this country. This corporation has made hundreds of millions of dollars of profit over the years. What we are saying, Mr. Speaker, in Motion No. 50 is that we want to ensure that the people of Canada have the right to say to the CPR, “When you get money in the form of subsidies for moving grain, we want you to invest that money to improve the system.” They are not asking CPR to invest some of its own money. That is a separate matter. At least CPR should invest all the money it receives from the Government in the form of subsidies in improving the railway system. I do not understand why this upsets the Conservative Hon. Members so much. It seems to me to be something natural to want to achieve.

Having heard the speech of the Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor) a few months ago in which he was so critical of the CPR, which is pretty unique for a Conservative Member of Parliament, I am surprised he did not greet our amendment with enthusiasm. We are not trying to tell the CPR how to run every facet of its operation, although it needs to be told to do many of the things which it ought to have done and which it has not. What we are saying is that we want to ensure that at least the money it receives in the forms of grants

for improving the system will be spent on that improvement. As I indicated, the CPR did not just grow like topsy. It grew because it was able to use the money which it got from Governments for railway improvements and so on, and divert it into other forms when it thought it was profitable, into a steamship line, into the airline, into real estate, into mining, and so on. It has not always been successful in what it decided to do. In the last week or so I—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. I have been trying to indicate to the Hon. Member that his time has expired. Perhaps he might like to seek the unanimous consent of the House to continue.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Scott Fennell (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to thank you for allowing our Hon. Members to get some practice in the Chair. I am sure they will reciprocate after the next election. I had some encouragement this evening when the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) sat down in the House Leader's chair. I thought maybe there was going to be another switch in Cabinet.

An Hon. Member: What a funny man you are.

Mr. Fennell: We have heard common sense, finally, when the Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor) talked about these amendments. He has been around in politics a long time and he got very basic points across about these amendments. I notice a lot of noise from the Liberals. It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that in the last three hours there have been no speakers from that side. That indicates there is no one over there who knows what is going on with this Bill. No one over there understands the Crowsnest Pass freight rate. No one over there wants to understand it.

After listening to the debate on this Bill and having an opportunity to speak, I know what this Bill is. It has nothing to do with the Crowsnest Pass freight rate. It is a Crowsnest Pass tax. If this tax does as much damage to central Ontario as the National Energy Program tax has done to central Ontario, I believe we had better bring a Bill up next to give central Canada a bit of a chance.

● (2100)

Mr. Shields: Relief.

Mr. Fennell: Well, we do not need relief. That is one thing that we do not need. I do wonder, Mr. Speaker, what Liberal Members have against western Canada. Obviously they are really mad at western Canada because the two most dreadful Bills that have faced the House in the last four years have been the National Energy Program and the Crowsnest Pass Tax.

I will address myself to Motion No. 50 which has been proposed by my colleague from the New Democratic Party. It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that early in the evening NDP Members were making a great deal of noise. Their