

Western Grain Transportation Act

collectively ample time in the course of their interventions to make clearly known—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member, but his allotted time has expired.

Mr. Lyle S. Kristiansen (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of Motions Nos. 47 and 49, standing in the name of the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin), and Motion No. 48, standing in the name of the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski).

There are a number of issues before us in dealing with these three amendments. The first and perhaps the most offensive, not only to Members of Parliament but I suspect to the people of Canada, is clause 22 of Bill C-155. It states that it takes two Members of Parliament for every one Senator to request a debate on any of the regulations. When it comes to regulations regarding awards and sanctions, regulations regarding the allocation of railway cars, regulations that could affect the quota system or the block system or regulations that could discriminate against a system participant unfairly or discriminate in favour of a system participant unfairly, it surely requires some detailed attention by the House of Commons.

● (1240)

Surely those kinds of regulations deserve more attention, if they are deemed to be of sufficient importance by 15 Senators or 30 Members of the House of Commons, than ten minutes of debate for each of six Members of this House. Surely they require more attention than that if the question is of sufficient importance to some 30 Members of the House of Commons. The Government cannot have it both ways. If it is important enough for 15 Senators or 30 Members of the House of Commons to want to use the time of the House to debate those regulations, it is of sufficient importance not to be restricted to a one hour debate. That is a conflict in itself.

Perhaps government Members, regardless of what government it may be, are telling us in advance that little interest will be shown in a debate of the regulations, about as much interest as the Government is showing in the debate on this and other amendments we have been debating over the last couple of weeks.

I wish to quote a poem from the book "The Blasted Pine, An Anthology of Satire, Invective and Disrespectful Verse". If it was a long poem I would not read it, but it is comprised of only two lines. It says something about the silence that has been so evident in the seats across the way. The poem is entitled "Places" and was written by Joseph Howe. I quote:

As Bees, on Flowers alighting, cease their Hum,
So, settling upon Places, Whigs grow dumb.

I wish some Members opposite would show a little more belief in the project they are trying so hard to sell both to the House of Commons and to the people of Canada. They seem to have taken the position that, as far as they are concerned, it is of extreme urgency, so much so that they have refused time and again overtures from this side to split the Bill into its various component parts. By doing so, they could move ahead

on the matter of rail modernization, something that was very important at the time of the last election and when they talked about the Western Canada Development Fund in two different years.

At the time that was discussed, there was no mention of the fact that it was going to require a five times increase in payments by western grain producers in order to get that modernization. When the Government talked about double tracking at the time of the last election, it did not mention that it would be only the western farmer who would pay. What happened to that promise? We now have 50 miles—or do I stand in danger of being prosecuted because I did not put that in kilometres? At the time of that promise, there was no mention that it would be only the western grain producer who would pay for the double tracking.

We also had the Western Canada Development Fund. We were assured that a lot of that would go for the modernization and upgrading of the rail system. There was no mention that that would not happen unless western grain producers paid for it. That went by the boards. It was repeated the next year, but there was still no mention of the fact that it would not happen unless western grain producers paid for it.

There is one overriding issue in this debate. The whole matter of the Crow debate can be put very simply: the people of western Canada do not believe the Liberals and they do not trust the CPR. That is the issue.

Motions Nos. 47, 48 and 49 are trying to address different issues in the Bill. The Government wants to push them through all at one time instead of splitting them up in some reasonable way. The Government will get its way with regard to this legislation by virtue of its majority, which it obtained a number of years ago. Sooner or later it will have its way. It does not want the House to debate any of the regulations which may ensue from this legislation unless 15 Senators or 30 Members of Parliament request such a debate. If such a debate takes place, it will be restricted to six Members speaking for ten minutes each, or the equivalent amount of time.

It may be that the Members of the Liberal Party believe that it takes two Members of Parliament to equal one Senator. As far as I am concerned, and as far as my colleagues in this and the other Opposition Party as well as the voters are concerned, we have a somewhat higher estimation of the people who are elected here than those which the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) appoints. I suspect that Canadians trust their judgment to pick representatives who are at least equal to those selected by one man, a man who currently is not having a great love affair with the Canadian public, despite many of his credentials I am astounded at the reasoning and logic which produce that kind of solution.

I wish more Members opposite would rise in their place rather than simply alight on it. I want to know what is the logic for providing for 30 Members of Parliament or 15 Senators. Surely there has to be some and I would appreciate being edified on that point. I ask Members opposite to give us the reasoning behind that one item.