

Transportation

with certain lines substitutes others, and corrects the typographical error. It does absolutely nothing more.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Chairman, may I ask the minister a question while we are reflecting on the amendment which the minister has proposed and while the committee is dealing with clause 1? I should like to ask the minister a question which I think goes to the root of the whole issue. Is it the minister's view that in this amendment the government in effect is accepting what I think was suggested by the hon. member for York South, because I see there is reference to financial assistance being provided in respect of the movement of grain and grain products pursuant to report under paragraph (e) of subclause (1) of clause 15? I take it that this is acceptance by the government of the fact that under clause 15 the transport commission in fact has the right to make a certain inquiry and if as a result of that inquiry it makes certain recommendations the government might have to take some action hinging on that.

Mr. Pickersgill: I think it is the reverse. My understanding is that it would prohibit any action being taken at all if any of these rates was ever changed. If any of these rates was changed, then a railway would be prohibited, unless a new law was passed by parliament, to receive any compensation whatsoever. It is just the opposite. There may be some implications in it but it is a prohibition in itself.

Mr. Baldwin: I understand that, but it does accept the fact that the transport commission under clause 15 can hold the type of inquiry which was the subject of discussion. I quite agree that if any changes are made which involve the carriage of grain by railway companies under what are called the statutory or related rates which have become attached to them, then of course the railway companies are out of court but this, I think, does accept the principle that there can be an inquiry under clause 15.

Mr. Pickersgill: In relation to those matters which are not covered by the statute.

Mr. Kindt: Mr. Chairman, would it be possible for the minister to provide us with a copy of his proposed amendment to section 329 so that we may study it? Several of us over here do not have copies.

Mr. Pickersgill: I can assure the hon. member that it is not an amendment to section 329.

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

Mr. Kindt: It is a proposed amendment.

Mr. Pickersgill: It is an amendment to clause 74, which purports to put in two new sections, 470 and 471, of the Railway Act. The section 329 which is now in the bill as amended is the one relating to the At and East rates. This has no relation to it. The old 329 is gone but not forgotten.

Mr. Douglas: Mr. Chairman, since we are going to allow the minister's proposed amendment to stand while consideration is given to it and while discussion is being carried on in respect of clause 1, may I ask the minister for a brief explanation of the second part of his amendment which has to do with section 471. Section 471 as proposed by the minister was included in the amendment moved by the Minister of Fisheries but I understand it was not in section 329 of clause 50 in the original form.

Mr. Pickersgill: This is an attempt to meet in the only way which seemed to be very feasible at this stage, without much more study of all the implications than I felt it possible for me to give, the very urgent and rather compelling observations of the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra which were echoed by the hon. member for Kootenay West whom I described perhaps rather irreverently as a "venerable echo". Both hon. gentlemen seemed to think that an inquiry of this sort would at least satisfy the British Columbia Federation of Agriculture, which had made representations, that the problem about which it is concerned was being taken under urgent consideration and that indeed a statutory examination of this problem was being provided for. I may say that one of the difficulties to which I did not allude the other day in dealing with this problem in this fashion is that we already have made a decision in the house, under a bill brought in by my hon. friend the Minister of Forestry, to deal with the same problem in another way through freight rate assistance for feed grains. That is not the only problem; there are half a dozen others. I do think, however, that this study ought to be made. It was felt that while this is only the statutory requirement of an examination of the matter, in view of its importance it ought to be done in this way.

Mr. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I do not like the wording of the clause in the amendment.