

Western Grain Transportation Act

● (1620)

[Translation]

Mr. Dubois: Mr. Speaker, there were some assumptions made concerning a possible benefit to railways in the first year with increases in the following years. They tried to reach a consensus in the West, which is very important. However, I am surprised that certain groups would favour some of the suggestions made in the Gilson report while others—and this is also quite important—such as the three Western wheat pools, the Saskatchewan and Alberta Wheat Pools and the Manitoba Pool Elevators, the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture and the Alberta Uniform were asking that the benefit be paid to the railways. I have never said in my comments that the Gilson report only had the railways in mind. There were possibilities of benefits being paid to the railways and Gilson also voiced certain assumptions. But on February 1, reference was made to the paying of benefits to the railways during the first year and in the following years to ratios up to 50-50. This was definitely the policy statement. I know there was a consensus in western Canada on those issues. Some of the organizations were favouring the Gilson position. Some were in favour of the policy statement made on February 1, and others were not.

[English]

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, Gilson heard all the recommendations, all of them. He heard from those with divergent views, and so on. Then he made the recommendation that the money be paid half to the producers and half to the railways over the period.

Mr. Pepin: No, 81, 19.

Mr. Taylor: It was not all to go to the railways. He heard all the recommendations, the same as the Minister. The Minister heard them all again. It was only when the Quebec Liberal caucus came into it that the decision was made. I have a telegram here which indicates that a hog producing company in my riding will have an additional cost of \$217,000 a year. How does the Member expect it to stay in operation? How long does he expect the hog and cattle producers in western Canada to lie low in order to protect the hog and cattle producers of Quebec? Why does the Quebec operation not compete with the rest of us and not get special advantage from the Government to do so?

[Translation]

Mr. Dubois: Mr. Speaker, concerning the pork industry, I am surprised at the comments made by my colleague as to how people in Quebec can understand the situation. I would remind my colleague from Alberta that 10 years ago, that Province was producing 41 percent of our pork. It is now down to 17 percent, although the Crow rate was never changed until today. And if Quebec's share of the production has gone up to

41 percent, it is because farmers in Quebec have been specializing and promoting their products, especially in the American Midwest, or maybe not the American Midwest but in the East and also in Japan. And if we look at western Canada's pork production, I would remind my colleague that although percentage-wise it has gone down, in absolute numbers it has not changed.

As far as the Gilson report is concerned, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the latter indeed recommended that the Canadian government should contribute \$3.5 billion to the Crow benefit between the years 1982-83 and 1985-86, and its estimate of the railway deficit stemming from grain transportation, at the existing level of subsidies, would come up to \$644 million. The recommendation was that the Canadian government should cover that deficit through legislation passed by Parliament. That was one of the recommendations in the Gilson report.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please! The period for questions and comments is over.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 45, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Shields)—Canada Post Corporation—Competing with weekly newspapers for advertising revenue; the Hon. Member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Neil)—Agriculture—Request for dual measurement labelling of farm chemicals. (b) Request that discussions be held with farm organizations; the Hon. Member for Dauphin-Swan River (Mr. Lewycky)—Railways—Crowsnest Pass rate—Resolutions of legislatures opposing proposed changes. (b) Justification for Minister's position. (c) Rail line abandonment policy.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

WESTERN GRAIN TRANSPORTATION ACT

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Pepin that Bill C-155, to facilitate the transportation, shipping and handling of western grain and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Benjamin (p. 25389).