

Hon. Mr. HAIG: I did not expect my honourable friend to accept that statement. If he accepted it he would not have introduced the Bill. But there is the fact, that this Bill can give no relief to anybody unless it increases the rates on goods either going into or coming out of Western Canada. The Maritime Provinces and the Pacific coast have been exempted; and Ontario and Quebec are at the base as far as water transportation is concerned. What about our shipments into and out of Western Canada? No railway can compete with water transportation in the carrying of bulk goods, if water transportation is allowed to take its free course. Look at sugar, for instance: the rate by water from Halifax to Fort William is 18 cents, but the rate by rail in winter is 44 cents. Why is it that Western Canada has the greatest elevator system in the world? Why is Fort William one of the outstanding elevator cities? Because it is necessary to have grain stored so as to be available for water transportation in summer.

If this Bill were in force to-morrow, would it give any benefit to the railways of Canada? That is the issue. I do not think anyone can show me that the railways would derive a single benefit. If we could say to the buses, "You must not carry passengers," and to the trucks, "You must not carry freight," we should be benefiting the railways, but the possibility of doing that is eliminated by the Minister's statement, and also by the fact, as shown by the evidence, that 98 per cent of the traffic on trucks and buses is intraprovincial, not interprovincial. I cannot find in the Bill anything which would give the railways a single bit of help. I should like the honourable leader of the Government to show me, if he can, where there is anything that would help them.

My honourable friend from Edmonton (Hon. Mr. Griesbach) suggests that the Bill be laid over. I have in my hand two copies of the largest paper in Western Canada, the leading Liberal paper of the whole country, the Winnipeg Free Press. I know of none that can compare with it. No other editor stands as high in the estimation of the public in Canada to-day as does the editor of that journal. We may not agree with him, but there is no doubt about the high place he holds in the public mind. I know him pretty well. I will not tire the House by reading long extracts, but I do want to read one paragraph from an editorial in the issue of Monday, March 8, and I would ask the honourable leader of the Government to listen to this:

This is a Bill to protect vested interests in transportation—on land, sea and lake—against the competition of newer, cheaper, more mobile and more efficient forms of transportation. After the verbiage is boiled down that is what the advocacy of the Bill amounts to.

That is the opinion of Mr. J. W. Dafoe, editor of that great paper. You could not find any words that would better express in such a short space just what this Bill means.

In the issue of March 15, that is Monday of this week, there is another editorial on the Bill, wherein is a statement to the effect that it seems strange to have a measure for the protection of vested interests advocated by a Liberal minister. Perhaps Mr. Dafoe thought such advocacy might have sounded all right on the lips of a Tory minister.

Those editorials state the opinion of Western Canada on this Bill. The people of the West believe the Bill will not put one dollar of extra revenue into the hands of the Canadian Pacific or Canadian National. They think, further, that their freight rates on grain shipped out—on wheat, oats, barley and flax—will be increased by from three to six cents a bushel, for the benefit of the monopolistically controlled lake boats, and that there will be a similar increase in the rates on goods brought into the West. I appeal to all honourable senators to remember that one of the duties of members of this House is to protect the rights of the various sections of the country. True, in the House of Commons Manitoba has 17 members, Saskatchewan 21 and Alberta 17: for the three Prairie Provinces there is a total of 55. But there are 190 members from other parts of the country, and that is enough to give a very large majority for this Bill if we pass it here. So I say we should not send the Bill over to the other House; we should see to it that the minority interests of the West are properly protected. This Bill would sell out the farmers of Western Canada for the benefit of vested interests, as the Free Press says. I submit that we as senators should not support such a measure. What is there that would prohibit the Canadian Pacific or the Canadian National from buying up some boats and running them? Not a thing.

I have already dealt with highways, but there is one further point I wish to stress. You cannot hold back invention. Men have tried to do that in the past. Trucks and buses are wanted by the public and will not be put out of business. It is related in Winnipeg that when Mr. Coleman, Vice-President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, was at that point, he cut down the number of trains run-