

What are the differences? The differences have to do with our differing views of the marketplace and the way in which the marketplace can be expected to discipline the railways. If I understand the arguments of my Conservative colleagues correctly, they want greater flexibility and opportunity for trucking in the system and for more producer choices. They believe it is only in that way that the railways may be made to provide the services that they otherwise might not provide. We are saying we should not do it through the market but, rather, through a Government which is willing to stand up to the railways and make them do what they are chartered to do, that is to provide service, in this case to grain producers, in other cases to passengers or whatever it may be. Here we have two very different views. We should not use this opportunity to confuse or provoke each other, but to make clear what the differences are between us. The Progressive Conservative position is that the railways cannot be disciplined by Government. They believe that the railways cannot be made to do what they are chartered to do by the Government and that only an increased use of the marketplace as a disciplining force will make the railways provide that service. There exists on the part of the Progressive Conservative Party what I would call the politics of despair or the politics of capitulation. Conservative Members are saying that they have given up on the idea of ever having a Government that could bring the railways into line and make the railways do what they are chartered to do and what they are subsidized to do and ought to be required to do. Members of the Progressive Conservative Party have basically said that that will never happen.

● (1710)

I can understand this attitude, having watched the Liberal Government do nothing for so many years to make the railways do what they should do. I can understand that kind of despair but I cannot understand why, in the final analysis, anyone would give in to that despair. Surely we ought to be able to imagine a situation in which the Government would stand up to the railways and make them do what they are supposed to do. That is the hope that we in this Party are not willing to give up. We are not willing to give up on the idea of a transportation system, in this case the railways, that could actually fulfil its obligations to the Canadian people.

Second, we are very cynical indeed about whether or not the marketplace will actually do what our friends on the right claim it will do. Will giving producers more choices about whether or not they transport grain by truck or rail in fact bring the railways into line or will the railways, because they have so much power in any case, simply adapt themselves to that reality and go into the trucking business so that they can pass on even more of the costs to the people through the municipal Governments and provincial Governments?

The marketplace does not work in the naive, simplistic and innocent way that my friends on the right would have us believe when they speak about how wonderful it would be if we increased producer choices and if we allowed a greater role for trucking. It simply does not work that way, but they believe that it does. They believe that it does and we believe that it

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does not. There is a very clear distinction between the position taken by the two Parties on this particular issue.

I shall now address myself to an irony which has been pointed out on a number of occasions. I do admit that an irony exists in that we appear to be defending the role of the railways. We appear to be defending the monopoly that the railways have over the transportation of grain. However, I point out now, as I did just a few minutes ago, Mr. Speaker, that we are not so much defending the railways as they exist now and as they have performed up to date; rather, we are defending the hope that some day we will have an integrated rail transportation system in the country that will provide the services that the railways were chartered to provide and that will act in the best interests of the Canadian people and economy. I admit that that is not the kind of railway system that we have always had, and indeed that we have at the present time. However, we do not want to give up on the idea of one day having that kind of transportation system.

Liberal Government Members and Progressive Conservative Opposition Members have together given up on ever having that kind of railway system in the country. Together, they have surrendered the fate of western Canada and the economic institutions, which have been built up over the years in that part of the country, to the marketplace through these kinds of amendments. That will be the long-term consequence of the Bill that we have before us. We cannot prove that; we can only make good arguments which thinking people will take seriously. They are quite right, Mr. Speaker, in saying that we cannot prove it. However, we do make such predictions. We ask that all people who may be listening to this debate or who until now have not paid much attention to the debate on changes to the Crow rate take the arguments that we are making seriously and see what is going on between the Liberals and the Conservatives. We ask them to write the Government and let the Government know that they do not like what is going on and that they think that Members of the NDP are doing the country a favour by trying to point out at every opportunity the cosy deals that are being made between the Liberals and the Conservatives, amendment by amendment.

We hope that the Government will yet see the wisdom of the criticisms we are making and change the Bill. Indeed, we hope that the Government would withdraw it altogether and split it up so that we can go ahead with railway upgrading and the coal question but leave the question of changes to the Crow rate to a much later date; perhaps about 100 years from now.

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, before I became a Member of Parliament, I was a Member of the Manitoba Legislature for four years. I remember that at that time, as is still the case, one of the very largest items of expenditure for any provincial Government was the building and maintenance of highways. It was a large expenditure when I was a Member of the Legislature some 25 years ago and it is still a big item today. In fact, road maintenance uses a bigger percentage of a provincial budget now than it ever did before, Mr. Speaker.