

● (1150)

However, this is not the situation with the railways. I believe that undermines their case that they are losing money on the Crow rate. But setting that aside for the moment, if the railways are so unwilling to co-ordinate their grain delivery under a pricing system which they believe is losing money, what will they do when the revenues provided for moving grain under Bill C-155 start to roll in? They will hang on to those carloads of grain even more tenaciously. I think that would be a shame, not only for the prairie farmers but for the whole country. It would mean that tax dollars continue to support an inefficient grain delivery system only because we failed to give the Administrator the power to require co-operation between CN and CP on grain transportation.

If this amendment is accepted, we will be taking an important step to correct a long-standing problem in our grain transportation system. It will be more difficult for the railway companies to thwart the efforts of the Wheat Board to marshal large volumes of grain for export by refusing to enter into reciprocal arrangements to take traffic on one another's track. We will prevent the railways from shipping grain over needlessly long distances to the detriment of ports like Churchill only because the railways believe that once the grain is on the CP line it stays on the CP line.

In short, we will be going a long way toward creating that efficient delivery system that the Government talks long and hard about. Therefore, I think there is absolutely no choice but for this House to accept this motion before us today.

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, I thought perhaps one of the Conservatives would stand and speak this morning.

**Mr. Benjamin:** No, they are tired.

**Mr. Murphy:** Although this is a Conservative motion, I wish to make a few comments on it. I also wish to express support for the motion and I hope that the Conservatives will speak to their own motion.

The effect on this motion is to give the Grain Transportation Agency Administrator the authority to require the railways to enter into an interchange agreement permitting cars from either company to go on one another's lines. That agreement is very important to the efficient running of Canada's railway system.

My colleagues for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) and Selkirk-Interlake (Mr. Sargeant) have already pointed out that the Port of Churchill consistently suffers from Canadian Pacific's reluctance and refusal to let grains from their areas into the Port of Churchill. They refuse to do so even though places like Saskatoon, Humboldt and Yorkton are closer to the Port of Churchill to which grains can be moved more efficiently and cheaply than to the present terminal of Thunder Bay.

Canadian Pacific would allow that grain to go to the nearest port if it had any concern for the farmers, the efficiency and

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welfare of this country. However, that grain has always gone elsewhere with the exception of one year.

We have heard many people say in this debate that the railways are losing money in the shipment of grain. If they in fact lose money for every mile that the grain is hauled, why do they refuse to allow the grain to go on their competitor's line? Why would they haul that grain farther distances to port instead of going to the nearest port?

For that reason I sincerely believe that many Canadians as well as many Members in the House are being sold a bill of goods with this legislation. If the railways were really concerned about saving money, they would allow the grain to travel on the shorter routes of their competitor. As the Hon. Member for Selkirk-Interlake pointed out, they would only be too glad to see their competitors take this paper loss. However, that is not the case because there is only one occasion when CP allowed the grain on its line to go on the CN line into the Port of Churchill.

The transportation critic for the NDP has often raised this concern in the House and I have raised it with the Minister, CN and CP. However, they all continually refuse to address these concerns and work out an agreement.

I am in favour of this amendment because I believe it is necessary. As Mr. Justice Hall pointed out this summer, if the railways were really concerned about efficiency they would take the initiative to allow interchanges in recognition of the fact that our grain must go to the nearest port, and that would increase the efficiency of the whole system.

My only criticism of the amendment introduced by the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) is that it does not automatically require the railway companies to send grain to the nearest port. It simply states that the Administrator—whether a friend of the Liberals or Tories, whichever is in power—may require that the grain be transported to the nearest port or that an interchange agreement be arranged.

While we support the amendment because it is a step in the right direction, it is not good enough. If we are really sincere about having our grain moved to market in the cheapest and most efficient way, a factor which this Bill does not address, the railways would be automatically required to do so. We would not allow corporate considerations to hinder that movement. We would be concerned about the money going into the farmers' pockets rather than charging him more to ship his grain to ports which are further away.

Therefore I support this amendment and hope Government Members who have had a chance to think about it will change the vote which they cast in committee and indeed support this amendment.

**Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East):** Mr. Speaker, I also rise to support the amendment proposed by the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski). Motion No. 33 before us would indeed improve the Bill if only to put some teeth in the clause. It would benefit producers since it would maximize their return. It would force the railways to exchange grain car for grain car.