Western Grain Transportation Act

gone, because the grain would be trucked out directly from the farm or possibly some gathering area to a larger terminal elsewhere, either on the main line or at some inland terminal. Once the elevator is gone there is a ripple effect which takes place throughout the community. If there happens to be a town at that delivery point, it will suffer because revenue generated and turned over many times because of the grain hauled into the local delivery point will no longer exist for the community. Of course, if that happens it can lead to many other social problems for the specific community or delivery point. The local butcher, the grocery store, whoever may have a business at that particular delivery point, will be out of pocket, and I do not think that is a very good situation.

In connection with this, Mr. Speaker, regarding Madam Speaker's ruling this afternoon on the motion to include the Peace River area under the statutory rate, I thought back to a community in my own riding which would have been affected as well, the Goodsoil area. They used to have an elevator very close to Goodsoil at a community called Peerless. That community eventually had its elevator closed down because of the high cost of trucking grain to another point. I say that because you are not aware, Mr. Speaker, that the elevator at Peerless had no branch line to service it. It was actually a gathering point where farmers hauled their grain. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool was thoughtful enough to service the farmers in that area, but because of the branch line not being there, eventually the elevator closed up and the farmers now have to truck their grain much farther.

I suppose the point I am trying to make is that an elevator without a branch line will not last very long if it relies totally on trucking. Under this amendment there may be some branch line sometime down the road that the Government would see fit to phase out or close down or refuse to upgrade, forcing trucking of our grain out of those areas, and as soon as that happens the elevator surely will die. If that happens, if the local farmers and officials have no control, I suppose so be it, we tried to do everything we could to prevent it. But in this situation, if this motion is not put in place, we will have Canadian Pacific Transport taking away business which could have gone over the rail lines which sustain the life of many of our rural areas. In some of these communities there might not even be a store at the delivery point, but there is a focal point because there is a branch line and an elevator and they add to the local economic and social good of those communities. It is one of the things which has held communities together in Saskatchewan so well, and I am sure in Alberta and Manitoba too.

● (1610)

I would be very concerned if the branch lines were to die because of conflict of interest between Canadian Pacific and CP Rail, the railway company. I would ask that other Hon. Members within the House support Motion No. 35 put forth by the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin). Incidentally, if my memory serves me correctly, it was supported by the Progressive Conservatives in committee. I would very much like to see them stand and give support to the motion

which, as I have outlined, would be a sustaining force within this piece of legislation. I would still prefer to see the legislation not through as a Bill encompassing the statutory rate, rail line upgrading and the Dominion coal blocks. However, if we cannot have the Bill split and it does go through, amendments like that found in Motion No. 35 would do something to protect not only the farmers who live in western Canada on smaller branch lines, but also our communities along those branch lines that go into the districts, hamlets and towns that are so much a way of our life in western Canada. If we do not put in motions like this, we will eventually lose our way of life, which is very unique, just as each region of Canada has a unique way of life.

I believe in co-operative federalism. This is one of the things on which the Government, the Conservatives and the New Democratic Party can come together and show that there is co-operative federalism in Canada.

I see that Your Honour is motioning that my allotted time has run out. I thank you for the opportunity to intervene here this afternoon.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Madam Speaker, once again we are getting a taste of the NDP hypocrisy. In Motion No. 34, it proposed a motion which—

Mr. Benjamin: Order.

Mr. Mazankowski: —which would lock out the—

Mr. Benjamin: Order. The Speaker called him to order this morning.

Mr. Mazankowski: —which would lock out the trucking industry in terms of the whole scheme of grain transportation. In Motion No. 35 it is saying, "Trucking, yes, but only in those areas where the branch lines have been abandoned."

Mr. Benjamin: Subsidies in those areas.

Mr. Mazankowski: I notice that the Hon. Member for The Battlefords-Meadow Lake (Mr. Anguish) tried to skate around those motions somewhat because I sense that he realizes that there is some merit in allowing the trucking industry to become more deeply involved in the whole scheme of grain handling and transportation. I should also say that I always enjoy the comments of the Hon. Member for The Battlefords-Meadow Lake because he always does make a very positive contribution and certainly speaks with much more knowledge than some of the other Hon. Members in his corner of the House. I think he has pointed out some areas where trucking can play a very useful role, not only by enhancing the entire grain gathering and handling system, but also in terms of providing better and more efficient service to the producers.

We have dealt with this motion in committee. The NDP wants to restrict the application of trucking only on those lines that have been abandoned by the order of the Canadian Transport Commission. We can certainly support the spirit and thrust of that. We did in committee and we will do so here again, because it is not this Party's desire to accelerate the