

*Western Grain Transportation Act*

northward 200 miles to Edmonton so they can take it south again to Vancouver. That was the CN.

CP with the Hardisty line, which is another line going through Edmonton . . . all that CPR grain went to Edmonton, but there is no line from Edmonton into Vancouver—so it went south to go to Vancouver. Trainloads of grain were passing each other like ships in the night between Calgary and Edmonton.

I see, Mr. Speaker, that I have run out of time. I hope that some of the Members from the Government side will take time during the debate to rise and explain how they see Bill C-155 maintaining an efficient grain system without this very important amendment.

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West):** Mr. Speaker, I just want to spend a couple of moments on this particular provision. I support the motion of my colleague, the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski). I represent a constituency in Saskatchewan, a Province that feels very strongly about the proposals being brought forward by the Government. I would say it is the considered opinion of the vast majority of grain producers in Saskatchewan that the proposals of the Liberal Government are ones which contain a very rich package for the railways. If anyone is considered to be a prime beneficiary of the initiatives of the Government, such as they are, it would be the railways of Canada. I dare say that if the Government, with its majority, decided to ram these proposals through in their current form, then if I were the president or the chairman of the board of directors of a railway of Canada, I would commission a statute of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) to be placed in a permanent location in the headquarters of the building, because the railways will be the main beneficiaries.

I am naturally very much concerned about the implications of the legislation as it would affect the producers. These are my constituents. These are people who are finding great difficulty in carrying out their responsibilities as farmers in Canada, considering their financial obligations, the pressures of inflation, the ever escalating costs of their operations. This is the message we heard in Regina, in my Province in the representations which all members of the committee heard. I sat through all the hearings in Saskatchewan, in my home Province, because I wanted to have a sense of the main stream of thought. I wondered if it was exactly the same perception as mine, after consulting and travelling around the Province prior to the hearings, as when the Bill was first introduced. That is one of the considerations that is lacking in the Bill. This is why this is another attempt on the part of Members of my Party to bring forward constructive suggestions with respect to the operation of the system, a matter which has caused great concern to farmers with regard to the transportation of their grain to the export points. Particularly in Saskatchewan they are faced with the proposition of lines of one railway or another running parallel or in some instances one being the more appropriate route and efficient way of moving grain to either export point.

● (1550)

That is why I want to suggest that there is a general feeling of support which the Government should seriously consider and accept instead of stating general principles on the matter of maximizing the returns to producers as provided for in the clause of the Bill. We should make the provisions of that clause even more certain.

My colleague's suggestion that the provisions in the Bill should contain a requirement for reciprocal and other arrangements to maximize the returns to the producers is one which I think anyone with any interest in the producers of this country should support wholeheartedly. That suggestion is to oblige the Grain Transportation Agency Administrator and the Grain Transportation Agency to require that the most efficient routes be adopted in terms of transportation of grain. It is a proposal that we should all subscribe to regardless of our view of the over-all effect of this legislation.

I simply say, in supporting this particular provision, that there are serious concerns in Saskatchewan, which were raised in the House again today, about the various programs the Government is operating and implementing. For example, we look back at legislation that was brought forward with respect to western grain stabilization. There were many promises made to the western farmer about the advantages he would experience as a result of that legislation. There were all those promises that were made under the legislation about how the producer would benefit. However, experience in western Canada has been to the contrary. While it is great to pass legislation and promise the world to the western grain producer, they have a bitter experience. When it comes to the pay-off, there is none.

Today, the matter was raised by the Hon. Member for Red Deer (Mr. Towers) with respect to the western grain stabilization program. We said at the time that that legislation would not be effective or sensitive to the real situation in regions of western Canada within the Wheat Board area.

**Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** How is that relevant?

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** It is relevant to what I am saying here. This is another example of words of general intention that read well and state that the Government will maximize the benefit to the producer. However, unless we put a mandatory requirement throughout this legislation and ensure that there will be the maximum benefit to the producer, the experience has been, using the analogy of the Western Grain Stabilization Act, that we will not experience that benefit in western Canada. We know that. We have been sold a bill of goods in the past and, as a result, the western grain producers are very skeptical. They want to know the precise wording of each of these provisions.

I support my colleague, the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski), and suggest that this provision with respect to the activities of the Senior Grain Transportation Committee and the Grain Transportation Agency Administra-