

move them from project A to project B". Therefore the committee is the second safeguard. On it will be representatives of at least the four Atlantic provinces and, possibly, from the province of Quebec.

When my hon. friend says that we might be devious and try to get away with reducing the amount to \$2 million, he is not making a realistic representation. Furthermore, we have provided in clauses 5 and 6 for the balancing of those elements which are necessary for these changes. We have also made sure that they can be applied to other modes, or in other ways. So I suggest with great respect that I cannot see any substance to the purely theoretical argument that my hon. friend is advancing. I am not going to say, and this bill does not say, that the same amount may be included each year. In other words, it is quite conceivable that the committee may recommend a shift in this system. I think it is useful to have that kind of flexibility. If an additional amount is required in the first year in order to achieve a permanent gain, there might be less money a year or two after that. But that is for the committee to decide.

I say that this is the best effort we have been able to come up with to meet the request of the provinces. All parties in this house have been accused of being arbitrary and of saying to the Atlantic provinces, "Take it or leave it." We are trying this means. Because we are breaking new ground, there are no precedents to follow. I am simply saying that this is our best effort and we will try to make it work. If it does not work I am certain I shall be hearing again from my hon. friends opposite.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Chairman, I have no difficulty in understanding and accepting the minister's constructive answers. Unfortunately there is a gap between his statements and the provisions of the bill. He said that the committee is to have certain powers and that it will initiate certain recommendations to the transport commission. The committee will say where the shift ought to be. I say to the minister that the provisions of the bill do not spell that out, and that is part of our dilemma.

May I revert to my theoretical discussion. I think the amounts paid are \$8 million for outbound—

Mr. Jamieson: It is \$8 million for inbound and \$6 million for outbound.

Atlantic Regional Freight Assistance Act

Mr. Nowlan: It does not take too much imagination, Mr. Chairman, to dream up a situation in which the \$8 million could be reduced to \$4 million or even \$2 million. Were the premiers involved in agreement with the principle that we begin with the figure of \$14 million? I think the minister mentioned a 30 per cent subsidy for the outbound trucker who until now has not been covered. As I read the bill, it says nothing about shifting part of the \$8 million—

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Chairman, this of necessity must be an open-ended arrangement. My hon. friend wants it to be open-ended on the one side and closed on the other. You cannot have it both ways. This is the option I present to him. If we are going to say that there has to be a fixed determination of the \$8 million and that it cannot be altered or changed in any way, in other words, that that figure is sacrosanct, then we must say that the amount of outbound must have a ceiling on it as well. I do not think that would be in the best interest of the Atlantic provinces. We surely have to say that whatever amount of business goes out of eastern Canada by rail or truck, that business is to have a subsidy. The amount could be \$14 million. Theoretically, I suppose it could be, and I hope it does get up to, \$20 million. It would mean there would be more manufacturing and industry in the Atlantic provinces and the people there would be doing better. If we really want to circumscribe this, it is possible to do so. It is possible to say the amount shall be \$8 million and that it will not be changed or varied one bit. That is not the practical way of going about it.

● (12:20 p.m.)

Mr. Nowlan: I ask the minister to look at clause 6(2) which is germane to this discussion. It states:

The total amount of assistance—

That is the assistance on outbound traffic.

Mr. Jamieson: No, Mr. Chairman. Where does the hon. member see outbound in clause 6(2)? Clause 2 has to do with reductions in tariffs. That is where we have taken it off of rail on the intra. It has to be applied in the same amount. It cannot exceed it.

Mr. Nowlan: I was going to say that the saving under clause 5(2), the payments that you are playing with, cannot exceed what the minister says. When the minister talks about \$20 million, I want to know where he gets the open end.