

experience and the common sense needed to bring forth a sensible Bill that all Parties will approve and live with.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in this debate to say that while I have only a few farmers in my constituency, I have several thousand railway workers working for both the CP and the CN who have a vital concern in the efficient operation of the railway system.

We are being asked in this Bill to destroy the statutory rate for the shipping of grain which has been commonly known as the Crow rate. The Crow rate has been characterized by many people in western Canada as their Magna Carta. It has had the support of so many people and organizations that for years the Liberal Government promised that it would not change the Crow rate until there had been full discussion and a consensus reached. Indeed, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said on February 13, 1981:

● (1240)

We have made a decision not to deal with the Crowsnest Pass freight rates until there is a very strong demand from representatives of western farm groups and other groups to touch the Crowsnest rates.

Did he get that consensus? Let me list just a few of the groups and organizations which have expressed opposition to the present legislation. I will not list them all because it would take much more than my ten minutes. Among the groups that have expressed opposition to all or parts of the Bill are the Alberta Wheat Pool, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Manitoba Pool Elevators and the Advisory Committee to the Canadian Wheat Board. Unanimous resolutions were also passed by the Manitoba and Saskatchewan legislatures.

An Hon. Member: No Liberals there.

Mr. Orlikow: There are no Liberals there. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) ought to give some thought as to why that is so.

Mr. Justice Emmett Hall is recognized in Canada for his ability to look at very complex problems and to give Canadians the benefit of his work and advice, which has proven over the years to be very sound. I remind the Minister of Transport that if we have a national, universal medical insurance plan in Canada, it is largely as a result of the study conducted by Mr. Justice Hall. Concerning the kind of legislation we are presently being asked to pass, Mr. Justice Hall said on November 24, 1981:

If once tampering with the statutory rate is accepted or condoned or is an item on the bargaining table, all will be lost. For once the subject is on the bargaining table, it will only be a matter of time until it is lost step by step.

I urge not only the Minister of Transport to heed the advice of Mr. Justice Hall but Hon. Members of the Conservative Party to do likewise. When they talk about freedom of choice, they have already accepted the idea that the rates for moving grain will go up and that somehow farmers will be compensated for the increase. I see an Hon. Member from Alberta nodding his head in agreement. All that means is that once the rates go up and farmers are compensated, we are really saying

that farmers can endorse the cheques and pass them on to CPR. That is not acceptable to us.

We are told that if the Bill is passed the railways will invest some \$16 billion in improving and upgrading the rail system. We are not told from where the money will come. It will come either from farmers in the form of increases over the next few years of up to 500 per cent in their cost of shipping grain, or through subsidies from Canadian taxpayers including farmers and city people. We are not told that under the plan as proposed by the Government over-all railway investment will actually decline or that railway investment will be reduced severely east of Calgary and Edmonton. We are not told that the Port of Churchill will be ignored or that Thunder Bay ports will be downgraded. We are not told that the rail systems in central and Atlantic Canada will also get very little support.

Where will the investment go? It will go to the mountain lines to subsidize the shipment of coal, and again CPR will benefit. We are not arguing that coal, potash or lumber should not be shipped. We are not saying that coal or these other products should not be exported if there are markets. We are saying that the cost of moving the increased shipments of grain, potash, coal and lumber should not be placed on the backs of the grain farmers of western Canada.

Who will benefit from this plan? Mainly the benefits will go to CPR, a corporation which was established and has grown fat as a result of grants of money to the tune of billions of dollars and grants of millions of acres of land over the years. I suggest that the Hon. Member for Portage-Marquette (Mr. Mayer) ought to look at the speeches of his Conservative colleague, the Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor), who knows much more about what CPR has done to this country than he knows. As a result of the assistance CPR has received from Canadians in the form of cash grants, subsidies, millions of acres of land and mineral rights, today it is one of the largest corporations, if not the largest corporation, in Canada with assets of over \$16 billion. It owns railway lines, shipping lines and airlines.

Mrs. Mitchell: Shipping registered outside Canada.

Mr. Orlikow: Yes, with shipping registered outside Canada and using foreign crews to avoid paying the fair wages which Canadian workers would demand. It owns real estate, mines and pulp and paper companies, to mention just a small part of its assets.

We have made our position clear. We are opposed to this rip-off which the Government is proposing, this plan that will benefit CPR. We have put forward a very clear alternative. Our alternative to the Government's plan calls for upgrading the railways. In the City of Winnipeg I have seen CPR and CNR workers who were continuously employed for 15 years to 25 years being laid off for periods of six weeks to 12 weeks in the last year. Why? The reason is that CP and CN officials have said that their current business is slow. Enough studies have been conducted to show that in the next ten years our exports of grain will go up by about 100 per cent, our exports