

Western Grain Transportation Act

Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski), has been used not only by the people the National Transportation Act serves, but by the courts, by the Canadian Transport Commission, and to clarify and direct the interpretation of every subsequent piece of legislation included in the National Transportation Act.

I should like to go through the purposes that are included in Bill C-155. When we travelled the country we were asked what the Bill is designed to do. When you look at it, you wonder if it is designed to increase rail capacity, if it is designed to move more grain compared to coal, sulphur, potash, lumber and other commodities. We have heard in this House that it is a job-creation Bill. Is the purpose of the Bill to create more employment in Canada? You wonder if it is to establish a new grain administration act, because that is included in it. Is it a Bill to provide more funding only for the railroads? Is it a Bill to make producers pay more for the movement of their products? Other Members have asked if it is to lift the freeze on the Dominion coal lands, or is it simply a Bill to dismantle the Crow rate?

The initial ruling of the Chair says:

—as I understand it, is to provide for new rates for the movement of grain through the Crowsnest Pass.

As I mentioned before, there are several other points included in the Bill. As you review the statement of purpose that the Hon. Member for Vegreville has presented, it has placed what Members on this side consider to be important points before the House.

If there are some things that other Members or the previous Minister of Transport find inconsistent with the objectives of Bill C-155, I should like to hear from them. When you look at the preamble you may find some definitions that are not actually consistent, but everything included in the statement of purpose proposed by the Hon. Member for Vegreville is consistent with the Act.

Mr. Flis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think we would find this debate much more helpful if we could stick to what we are supposed to be debating, and that is the acceptability of Motion No. 1. The House Leader for the Official Opposition said on October 6, as reported at p. 27832 of *Hansard*:

I find myself in agreement with the Chair's concern with respect to Motion No. 1.

I should like Members of the Opposition to give reasons why Madam Speaker should accept the preamble. The House Leader of that Party said that it was not acceptable. I do not think the debate is on whether the Bill should have a preamble or not; that is not what we are debating. The debate is whether Madam Speaker can accept Motion No. 1. The Conservative House Leader said, and I quote him again:

I find myself in agreement with the Chair's concern with respect to Motion No. 1.

Mr. McKnight: Mr. Speaker, I think it is quite apparent that the Speaker made the ruling “—as I understand it, is to provide for new rates”. That is the case that is being argued now, with the object of increasing understanding and knowl-

edge so that decisions can be made to put a statement of purpose in the Bill. I am sure the Parliamentary Secretary would agree that the statement of purpose does not go beyond the Royal Recommendation. It does not increase the moneys expended by the Crown and it does not change the intent of the Bill in any way. If in the eyes of the Parliamentary Secretary that statement of purpose does change the intent of the Bill in some way, then I am sure the Hon. Member for Vegreville and other Members on this side would be pleased to hear about it. We would take a very conciliatory attitude toward changes that Members of the Government would like to see included or excluded from the statement of purpose. However, Mr. Speaker, it does not change the Royal Recommendation or the economic package in which it comes, the financial burden on the Crown, and it does not distort the meaning of the Bill, but only in our opinion clarifies and enhances the ability of people to know what the intent of Bill C-155 is. The long title of the Bill is:

● (1500)

An Act to facilitate the transportation, shipping and handling of western grain and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof.

The first words of Motion No. 1 read:

1. It is hereby declared that an economic, efficient and reliable transportation system making the best use of all available modes of transportation at the lowest total cost is essential to protect the interests of the grain producers and to maintain the economic well-being and growth of western Canada—

There is nothing inconsistent in those words. But if one continues to read one sees that it enunciates the other directions which are in this Act. Those of us who have taken part in this debate, and those of us who are in this Chamber now, will not be the only people interpreting this Act. If by some chance this Bill passes, there will be generations of grain producers, railroaders, legal counsel and Parliamentarians all trying to interpret the meaning of Bill C-155. I am not a suspicious man, but the reason could be that the Government would wish to have this open to other interpretations which we have not foreseen. I would not say that of the previous Minister of Transport because he worked on this Bill in a very open and forthright manner. I am sure he would like to see a statement of purpose for the Bill on which he spent 18 months. The previous Minister of Transport, on several occasions when he met with the standing committee, asked us to assist him in defining the purpose of Bill C-155. I see the former Minister of Transport now in the House and he is smiling. The present Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy), who is not in the House, also asked for our assistance when he came to the Standing Committee on Transport. The Government has even presented amendments which have been beyond the scope of the Bill and which have been found in the eyes of the Chair not to be in order. However, through the art of conciliation and through an understanding that we are working as a group to make this Bill the best Bill we possibly can, there will be discussion and debate on other pieces of this legislation which have been found out of order.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that unless the Parliamentary Secretary or the Minister can point out where this motion goes