

Transportation

I should like to know what is meant by "inquire into the revenues". Is it likely that the commission will accept the figures of the railway companies or will it use a special costing technique to ensure that the figures cited do represent the actual cost and the actual revenue in connection with the movement of grain which, as the minister knows, is substantially more than it was even a few years ago?

Mr. Pickersgill: The commission will, of course, not accept the figures given by interested parties. It will pay attention to the figures put forward by the railways and listen to anyone else who may wish to make representations. But it will have an accounting staff of its own, using the best and most modern techniques. It will be required to reach its own decision.

Mr. Pascoe: Will the figures arrived at by the board be the ones upon which a decision is reached?

Mr. Pickersgill: Undoubtedly.

Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert): The minister knows that we in Halifax and Saint John are interested in flour and in port parity. Where can we anticipate that an amendment on port parity—

Mr. Pickersgill: Clause 59, I think.

Mr. Churchill: That is simply the repeal of an act.

Mr. Forrestall: One amendment will involve new section 329A where a description is set forth of eastern ports. Would the minister prefer it to come under clause 59?

Mr. Pickersgill: It seems to me that anything of that sort would come under clause 59; I think the expression "eastern port" is defined for the purpose of 329 which relates only to grain and flour.

Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert): When the minister says clause 59 that is just an arbitrary number because it deals with the repeal of another piece of legislation.

Mr. Pickersgill: We are trying to avoid renumbering all these clauses and there was room to put in another—

Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert): That is agreeable provided that if a debate ensues and it is necessary to make changes—

Mr. Pickersgill: I will make certain proposals and if the hon. member wishes to make a proposal to amend mine he is perfectly free to do so.

Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert): Suppose our amendment causes a change in another clause which has already been passed?

Mr. Pickersgill: I suppose we would have to deal with that problem when it arose. If the committee accepted it, it would be the will of the committee.

Mr. Forrestall: We are trying to accommodate the minister by co-operating. We have two amendments and we hope he will accept one of them.

Mr. Pickersgill: Has it anything to do with grain and flour?

Mr. Forrestall: It has everything to do with the export and import of commodities.

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not think it would have any relevance to this clause at all. If it does, the hon. member can make a reservation to that effect.

Mr. Forrestall: We will make a reservation with regard to 329A and let it stand. The minister suggested 59 to avoid renumbering.

Mr. Pickersgill: I hope we shall not have to keep this open. If it has to be re-opened as a consequence of something else, that is all right.

Mr. Nasserden: With regard to 329 did I understand the minister to say that if a government ever found it necessary to bring forward a measure of assistance to the railway companies because of losses on the Crownsnest rates, this matter could be brought before a committee of the house?

Mr. Pickersgill: I cannot possibly say. Three years from today it will be January 16, 1970. The election was in 1965. It would appear to me that this parliament would be ended. The hon. gentleman is almost certain not to be in the next one and even I may not be a member. So it would be foolish of us to try to predict the future.

Mr. Nasserden: I cannot help feeling a little more optimistic about being back than the hon. member is. I believe it would be a good thing if the minister, as the present Minister of Transport, would state for the record his anticipation that when a matter such as this is brought before the house there will be an