

*The Address—Mr. Mayer*

the construction of facilities at Ridley Island in the port of Prince Rupert has been delayed.

I find the concern of the government over spending money to see that western Canada is in a position to export some of its products, which would contribute to the benefit of the whole country, inconsistent with the statement in the throne speech that rail facilities will be upgraded and port facilities improved. It seems to me that what has happened during the three months since the throne speech is the exact opposite to what was referred to in the throne speech.

Another area of transport to which I would like to refer concerns air service to the city of Brandon. My constituency runs very close to the city of Brandon. In fact, the Brandon airport is in the constituency of Portage-Marquette, so this matter is of very great concern to me as well as the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) and other hon. members from western Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan. Last November the then minister of transport changed the air transport policy to allow a regional air carrier to apply for a route between Calgary, Brandon and Toronto, but nothing has happened since then. PWA applied for that route but no hearings have been scheduled, although I am told they are supposed to be held in the fall.

● (1520)

Almost a year after the policy was changed by the previous minister in order to allow an adequate service between Brandon and points east and west, nothing has happened. Brandon is a productive and aggressive community of some 40,000 people and services an area of some 140,000 people in south-western Manitoba, so it needs and deserves a jet air service. The government has done nothing to see that the service is made available, however. I find this rather unfortunate, Mr. Speaker.

Just this week I was somewhat infuriated when a press release came to my attention stating that Frontier Air Lines had been granted a licence to serve Saskatchewan cities. This is an American airline based in Nevada, yet it was granted a licence to fly between Saskatoon, Regina and Minot, North Dakota, and on to Denver without a hearing being held. This foreign carrier applied for and was awarded a route without a hearing, yet a Canadian carrier willing to provide a needed service that would be well supported, and without subsidy, was told that a hearing was necessary. PWA was the only applicant for the route to service Brandon. The government does not seem to have the courage to instruct the CTC to set a date for that hearing. This is a rather shocking way to deal with constituents, Mr. Speaker.

In his remarks the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Collenette) said that he was interested in a fair deal for all constituents in Canada. I take him at his word and hope he will prevail upon the Minister of Transport to set a date for a hearing so that we can supply a first-class air service to an area of the country that so badly needs it. This is particularly important in view of the fact that

a licence was granted without a hearing to an American airline to serve an area of western Canada.

In the throne speech the government said that a meat import act would be introduced in order to protect consumers and producers. The drought in western Canada is serious and will cause problems for the rest of this year and next year as well. That is assuming that we have normal rainfall and a normal growing season for 1980-81. Cattle and grain produced now will not necessarily be sold for another year. The lack of moisture over the last six months has already had its effect on what will be offered for sale in 1980-81.

The cattle industry has been calling for a beef import law for a long time. It was sorely needed in 1976 when Canada was the only major importing country with open borders for beef. In that year both Australia and New Zealand sold very large quantities of beef in this country at prices lower than those in the United States. At that time the United States had a beef import law which protected cattlemen and precluded excessive imports from offshore.

When the Conservative government was formed over a year ago, one of its priorities was a beef import law. I understand that the legislation was ready and would have been introduced in the last week before Christmas. This government, however, has shown no intention of introducing such legislation in this session. This is a very important piece of legislation, as beef producers are now making the decision whether to increase or decrease the size of their herds. The lack of rainfall and the resultant lack of feed has led to the present critical conditions. If producers knew that the government cared enough to protect them from excessive imports such as was the situation in 1975-76, they would be encouraged to breed more animals and thus make more beef available.

Unfortunately the government has not seen fit to give this legislation any priority. I would argue very strongly that it should be brought forward and dealt with as quickly as possible.

Last year, with some other members from this side of the House, I had the opportunity to sit on a beef import consultative committee which made recommendations on what the beef import legislation should contain. The guaranteed minimum access levels that Canada is committed to under the GATT negotiations imposes certain limitations on the legislation but if the legislation the government proposes is anything like the legislation the previous government intended to introduce, I am sure it would receive support on all sides of the House and could be dealt with very quickly. It is unfortunate it was not brought forward in this session. It should have been the law of the land by now and would certainly have been of use to beef producers when planning their future beef herds.

Another area of concern is the Two-Price Wheat Act. The government has not seen fit to introduce a bill on this subject but instead a Senate bill to amend the act is before the House for consideration. This is an urgent problem. As a poor crop is expected in western Canada, this bill would be welcomed by producers who will have less for sale this year than in previous years. If the government were serious in its attempts to have