

Western Grain Transportation Act

Mr. Fulton: Perhaps it is limburger cheese. Let us take a close look at the Tory freedom of choice proposal. First, farmers will have the choice to pay more to the railways. I am sure that farmers will like that. Second, it will reduce the price of grain at the farm gate. I am sure that farmers will like that. Third, it will dilute the benefit to producers of grain by spreading the Crow benefit to cultivated acres which do not produce statutory grains. I am sure that farmers are very interested in seeing that done. The psychological benefits of freedom of choice are outweighed by reduced economic choices. That, Mr. Speaker, will happen as all of the local elevators close. Tory Members know that, and that is why Tory Members from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta are not participating in this debate, though one of them pops up from time to time to make a speech like the one made by the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West.

The Minister of Transport was grinning. He knows that the Tory deal has already been made. Members of the Tory Party have collapsed and are now supporting the Bill. They are taking the big business line. They are pro-CP. We know what is going on. The Minister of Transport was grinning because he knew that the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West had already swallowed the bait but needed to keep his constituents under control.

We will see. The reporters who are covering this debate, Mr. Speaker, will see how many Tory Members from the Prairies will get up to speak on this issue in the next couple of days. That will be the telling fact.

Mr. Malone: What a despicable person to be in Parliament.

Mr. Fulton: The Hon. Member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone) has once again described himself as a despicable Member. I certainly would concur with many of his comments about himself, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Taylor: What makes you so bitter? Are you afraid you will be defeated?

Mr. Fulton: The Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor) is starting to sing. Members of the Tory Party are starting to sing, Mr. Speaker, because they know that I have lifted the curtain on their freedom of choice scam that would take \$6,000 away from the farmers on the Prairies.

Mr. Mazankowski: It is the truth.

Mr. Fulton: The Hon. Member for Vegreville says that it is the truth. He is waving his hand. He has talked to Jack Horner. Jack Horner has said, "Hey, look, Don, you had better talk to Jean-Luc because the fix is in."

Mr. Len Gustafson (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I think that the quality of debate has dropped to a new low.

Mr. Fulton: Because you are up.

Mr. Gustafson: It is interesting to note that speaker after speaker from the NDP has done nothing more than attack Conservative Members. Members of the NDP know very well

that the Conservatives represent the primary producers of western Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gustafson: I will not bear on this point, but I want to make it abundantly clear to the House and to the people of Canada that Members of the NDP have brought nothing constructive to the debate, to this point.

I think that when we look at Bill C-155 we must look at it with the best interests of the primary producer in mind. Again and again Members of the NDP have tried to bring up what various leadership candidates have said, but the position taken by the Conservative Party from day one of this debate has considered the importance of the primary producer.

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We know what the New Democratic Party did to the primary producer in energy. Its record is clear in this House. We know how it supported the Liberals to bring in a national energy policy which put the primary producers of energy flat on their backs and cost Canada dearly. If we are going to continue in that direction, the farmers of Canada are going to suffer severely. That should not be the position of the Government and it certainly will not be the position of the Conservative Government. And we will take power. That is what all the hollering is about from the NDP. That Party can see the handwriting on the wall. It can see what is coming and it is concerned, which gives me a certain amount of satisfaction, Mr. Speaker, along with every Conservative Member on this side of the House, because we also can see the handwriting on the wall. We know that the farmers and the primary producers understand what has happened.

I would like to speak about the most important factor, how we can strengthen the position of the primary producer in Canada. First of all we must look at the timing of the situation. I am happy that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) is in the House.

Mr. Pepin: I am always here.

Mr. Gustafson: The Minister tells me he is always here, but I am particularly happy he is here this morning. The farmer has faced some very serious situations in terms of the cost of production. The Minister has heard that many times in the debate. Yet he has not responded in a positive way. In the international marketplace our producers face a very serious challenge of competition.

Dr. Andy Schmidt of the University of Saskatoon has done extensive studies into exports and into competition in the international marketplace for the primary producer. He tells us that the United States of America subsidizes its producers over all by 33 per cent. He tells us that subsidies in Australia are in the neighbourhood of 50 per cent on shipping freight rates for grains exported from Australia. In addition to that, the European Common countries are subsidizing their farmers up to \$5 per bushel for wheat.