

*Western Grain Transportation Act*

where a Member comes from in Canada or what his or her position is on the Crow, that is completely unacceptable and must be thoroughly rejected.

I may have a different view from that of some of my colleagues on the Crow because I come from eastern Canada where there is also concern about the changes. As the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) said, the changes do not only affect the West.

Eastern Canada benefits from grains and feed grains grown in the West. The country is tied together. It is not wise to move against the economic plank of a country arbitrarily and unilaterally the way the Government has done.

My views may be different from those of some Members but I agree with the Minister's thoughtful remarks on Thursday morning when he started this debate. He admitted then that there were differences of opinion, as I do. I also admit that a consensus has been forming since press releases were issued on the subject. There has been change, and it is recognized that there has to be some change to the fundamental rate.

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not want an inadvertent misleading of the House. Closure has not been moved; time allocation was introduced on second reading of the Bill. It will go to committee and then we will have third reading.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Mr. Speaker, I respect the Hon. Member but, with respect, his point of order was spurious. I have been around this House a little longer than he has. When there is an allocation of time for one more day on a Bill as fundamental as this one, he may not call it closure but the people do. The Government has a problem with its perception of what is happening in this House. The cold, sad fact is that the Government is so concentrated on the centre of Canada, basically on Quebec and Ontario, that it cannot understand the perceptions of the rest of the country. In the West and in the East and in every other part of the country that considers the Bill objectively, people are going to say that this is the club of closure and that it will cut off any more consensus and any more change.

● (1740)

I would like to ask the Minister what he would have felt like if, on one of his proposals, his Liberal caucus had invoked closure, long before Members of the Quebec caucus kicked up their heels and got him into what I consider to be rather a dubious, unholy alliance with some of the wheat Pools in Canada, to force the Minister, I believe against his better judgment, to change. It was not the Pools of the West, it was the Quebec Liberal caucus.

I ask you a rhetorical question, Mr. Speaker. Let us assume the Crow was in Quebec, with the Liberal majority coming from Quebec, do you think the Crow would be shot down in Quebec if things were reversed? This is the type of understanding I am trying to get from the Hon. Members opposite in the brief ten minutes, and now five minutes which I have left, because I have been informed, Mr. Speaker—and I bet Hon.

Members opposite do not appreciate it, because I did not appreciate the full extent—that there are 125,000 permit holders, producers of grain, in the West. On the basis of the 10 hours and 50 minutes, which adds up to 650 minutes, with a little calculation, you get the grand total of one-third of a second which they have had in representations before the House before closure or allocation of time was moved.

As Shakespeare said many years ago, "A rose by any other name is a rose", and if there is a thorn on it, it is going to prick your skin and hurt you just as much as any other rose, regardless of the bloom. And this is going to hurt people in all parts of the country, Mr. Speaker. You know that. There is a fantastic arithmetical factor here. Other than the two Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, there are 21 Liberal Members from the other eight Provinces. Yet we have in the Province of Alberta 21 Members, regardless of political complexion, balanced against the 21 from the Government benches other than those from the two central Provinces. Is it any wonder that the Members are concerned about the imbalance of a unilateral move here on something that, if it were reversed, the Government would not dream of doing?

What would this Government feel like, Mr. Speaker, if after the election there were to be mammoth support for the Conservative Party—as there will be? And if the Liberal Party wants to write its epitaph in perpetuity, it is doing it today in invoking closure on the Crow and not letting the debate continue. What it has done today, Mr. Speaker, is to cement division and opposition to this unilateral act which is going to come back to haunt it.

As my friend, the Hon. Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) said, we had the same division on the Constitution. That came back to haunt the Government. And we are going to have it here. What would this Government think, Mr. Speaker, after an election, of having a strong representation from the West, having the balance about the way it is, but with a Conservative majority, and some Minister, because of pressure from some provincial caucus, deciding to put a special surcharge on the St. Lawrence Seaway so that the ports of Vancouver, Prince Rupert and Churchill could benefited? Would that be in the national interest?

This is an economic manifesto for the West which has been there since 1897. It is now being done away with at a chop with closure by the ham-handed hand of the Minister of Agriculture. Let us look at one of our cultural manifestos which the majority of Members voted in this House, the Official Languages Act. Let us say that after an election, there is an imbalance of representation and Hon. Members, responding to a provincial or regional caucus, say, "Let's get rid of the Official Languages Act because it costs too much money". The Late Right Hon. Mr. Pearson said, and I believe it, that it is proper to pay for things to keep this country together. If you have that standard for the cultural manifestos in the land, why is there not some sensitivity to the economic manifestos of the land? That is what Government is running in the face of, Mr. Speaker.