

The third principle is to involve many bureaucrats in the administration. The last principle I want to address is probably the worst of all, that is, the sell-out. In the final analysis, after one thinks a compromise has been reached, a fifty-fifty agreement, at the last minute it is thrown out the window and it is the Quebec Liberal caucus which really controls the shots. That is what we see here today.

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Mr. Speaker, at the outset I want to say that as a prairie Member who was raised on a small central Saskatchewan grain farm, I know that the Bill before the House today will be one of the most serious blows to the small grain farmer in my Province that he has seen since the 1930s and the Great Depression. I also know from letters that I am receiving as the Member of Parliament for Yorkton-Melville, that my constituents, from the National Farmers Union on one side, which is a more progressive organization, to the Chamber of Commerce on the other side, which is a very conservative organization, are all standing united in opposition to the Bill before the House today. It is on their behalf that I want to say a few words and plead with fellow Hon. Members to listen to my words with respect to the dire consequences to the Prairies and, indeed, to all of Canada if the Bill is passed.

**Mr. Thacker:** They won't listen. They won't even speak.

**Mr. Nystrom:** They will not even listen, as one of the Hon. Members from Alberta said. I think that is the important part of this whole debate. The Liberal Party has two Hon. Members from western Canada, the city of Winnipeg. There are approximately 74 Members of the Opposition from western Canada, yet the Government is not listening to the representatives of the people. It is imposing on the people of western Canada something which the people out West do not want and which is surely a denial of fundamental democracy, a denial of what this parliamentary system is all about.

I want to challenge the Minister across the way to do one thing, if nothing else, that is, to organize a national referendum amongst permanent bookholders to see whether they agree that they should keep the Crow rate or whether they should get rid of the Crow, as the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) is suggesting in this legislation. Surely to goodness, that is democracy. If they were to agree with the Minister, that would be fine and well and we would have the changes which he introduced. However, I am sure that they would not, just because the Bill is one which would impose an increase on the price of moving grain for the farmer of some 500 per cent between now and the year 1991. With the rise in the price of grain by some 500 per cent between now and 1991, many small and marginal farmers will be forced off the land. They will not be able to produce grain and feed the people of Canada and the world.

Another thing to note, which it seems to me a number of Hon. Members who are not from the Prairies do not realize, is that the price of grain has fallen. At a time when world grain prices have fallen, the Minister is bringing in a Bill which increases the cost to every farmer in prairie Canada. I think it shows, once again, why the Liberal Party is extinct in western

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Canada. It does not have any fundamental understanding of the important issues affecting western Canadians.

It is also important to realize that the issue is not important just to the prairie farmers but also to Canada as a whole. My seatmate comes from Brantford. I am sure that he could tell the House that when the farmers' income drops in western Canada, then people stop buying tractors, combines and other kinds of machinery produced in a city like Brantford. The end result is that 25 per cent or 30 per cent of the people in that kind of city are unemployed. For such a reason, this Bill is very important. It is very important that we somehow persuade the Minister and the Government across the way to change their minds and to keep the Crow rate which is such an important part, for us on the Prairies, of the bargain of Canada, the bargain of Confederation.

**Mr. Pepin:** Good Lord! Eighteen ninety-seven, Confederation!

**Mr. Nystrom:** All of the countries with which we are competitive, the United States, Argentina, Australia and countries in Europe, provide massive subsidies for their grain farmers. If the Government takes away the Crow and makes shipment of our grains some 500 per cent more expensive in the next eight or nine years, then our farmers here will be at a tremendous disadvantage in a competitive sense with fellow farmers around the world. That will be goodbye to many grain markets for Canadians and to a lot of foreign currency that would benefit the nation as a whole, not just the Prairies and the prairie farmer.

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The Americans have set up massive subsidy programs for their wheat. They recently introduced a blended credit program of \$1.5 billion over the next three years to subsidize the interest rates of grain when it is shipped to the Third World. The Europeans give perhaps even more massive subsidies while the Argentinians and the Australians give subsidies as well.

Another consideration is the fact that Canadian farmers are an average of 600 to 800 miles farther away from port than other competitors in countries around the world, including the United States. American farmers have the advantage of the Mississippi and the Missouri River systems. This puts them much closer to a port for the transportation of their grain. Since we do not have that advantage in western Canada, there is an additional cost for our grain which makes it necessary to keep the Crow rate.

For those reasons I think the Government opposite must be made to reconsider the importance of the Bill before us. There are a number of other issues concerning the Crow rate which one can mention. For example, there is the issue of variable rates. This present legislation will allow for variable rates and will provide the possibility, and perhaps the likelihood, of the railway companies being able to charge what they wish for shipping grain along various lines across the Prairies.

**Mr. Pepin:** Have you read the Bill?