

Western Grain Transportation Act

values which they espouse incessantly, and the social values which they say they espouse, community values and the traditional ways of life. It is those very economic and commercial values that out of the one side of their mouths they espouse while systematically tearing away at the other set of values which they say they cherish in western Canada.

The Government, the railways and the coal companies have the media blitz to change the Crow and, indeed, the Government acted, I believe, in a way that was horribly contemptuous of farmers by advertising the way it did, spending public money to persuade the Canadian public of something which is not passed by this Parliament and is not Government policy. Then it went ahead and changed it. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, when the details of this get out, if we in Parliament can be successful in delaying this line-up so that people will have a chance to see just what is going on here and to think about it, that this Government will lack the essential support of the people on the land. It should be no more difficult for us, and I hope it will not be, to save the Crow in these circumstances than it was for previous generations to set up the Wheat Pools and many of the other economic institutions which Canadians have rightly set up in order to be an example of what is possible when people work together to control their own economic destiny, and make that economy accountable to the common good and not to global profit strategies of the multinational corporations. In this, the New Democratic Party and the CCF before it, had an important role to play, and in our defence of the Crow rate against the Liberal Government and against Conservative indecision we are proud to continue in that tradition.

Mr. Thacker: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) gave his usual labour-socialist diatribe against the big corporations. I can give him some examples of the CPR also, and I will in my speech. However, he argues that we should return to the original agreement, the enforcement of the original agreement, and I ask him, does he really mean that? That would mean only 289 points were covered, and it would only cover grain from those 289 points and flour going to Thunder Bay.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, my point was that if we want to renegotiate the agreement, we should put the whole agreement back on the table. That was very simply said. Let us not just renegotiate that part of the deal which the CPR has come to dislike. And when we put everything back on the table, we put everything back on the table, the land, mineral rights, the whole works, not just parts of it.

Mr. Flis: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member blamed the federal Government for spending a lot of money on advertising. My comment here is that if the New Democratic Party would be honest with its constituents and give them accurate information, we would not have to waste taxpayers' money on advertising.

The Hon. Member spent a great deal of time on variable rates. If the shipper and the railway agreed to provide the farmer with lower rates, would he agree to that, or would he

suggest that providing lower rates would not be advantageous to the farmer?

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Flis) has asked me two questions. First, with regard to the advertising, I accept the credit which he has heaped upon the NDP, that we are so powerful in influencing the country that the Government felt it had to take out a massive advertising campaign to counter what we were saying. The fact that it had to resort to advertising I suppose is a testimony to the decay, the atrophy and the impotence of the Liberal Party, and the fact that it has no one in the West to make its case. It has 146 Members of Parliament and it cannot make a case in the country? That is what your MPs are for. If you have to resort to newspapers to make your case, and spending Government money to promote Liberal policies, then you ought to pack it in right now, baby, because it is all over for you. You are acting not just in contempt of Parliament, but in contempt of the whole political process.

As far as variable rates are concerned and the question of whether we would support lower rates, what we want for the grain producers in this country and what the grain producers want is predictability. We need predictability in a world where the fuel prices are unpredictable and generally rising, where fertilizer prices are unpredictable and generally rising. That is what is predictable, that they rise. They go up and down. We live in a world where interest rates are unpredictable. The one predictable thing which grain producers in this country have always been able to rely on is the Crow rate. Because some railway might offer lower rates on one occasion is hardly a reason to abandon something which has been as economically reliable and sound as the Crow rate.

Mr. Gustafson: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie). He suggests nationalizing the railroad. I believe he used the word "socialize" but I am not sure what that means. Did the Hon. Member and the NDP not learn a lesson from the national energy policy, where that type of direction drove \$20 billion worth of capital out of this country and ended up costing the farmers an additional 66 cents a gallon for gasoline? He talks about leakage of capital. What could we expect in terms of leakage of capital from Canada if this type of a move was inflicted upon the railroads and upon the farmers of Canada?

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I have always felt that the consequences which my colleagues on the right, the Progressive Conservative Party, attribute to the National Energy Program were greatly exaggerated, and I still do. Precisely what happened in terms of the National Energy Program, to a certain degree, is precisely what has happened here, that is, that the will of the people is controverted by the will of the corporations. They played the same game when it came to the National Energy Program that they played with regard to grain producers. If they do not get their way they will go somewhere else. They will go with their tails behind them