

Parliament to darn well pass the Bill as fast as we expect to". That is the trouble with what is going on in the House of Commons and with what has gone on for many years, and that is the trouble with this Bill.

I say in closing, Mr. Speaker, that British Columbians will not be taken in. They want better rail transportation. They know that the money can be spent now and that the rail transportation system could be improved. But they also know that there is no excuse in the world to stop improving the railways just because this Bill will take a little bit more time than was expected by the Hon. House Leader of the Liberal Government.

Mr. Terry Sargeant (Selkirk-Interlake): Mr. Speaker, a few moments ago I listened with a great interest to the speech made by my political neighbour, the Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp). I found it interesting that in his speech, which albeit was only ten minutes, he never once mentioned the word "Crow" or the words "statutory rate". He made no defence of the Crowsnest Pass rate, and I think that that is rather typical of the Tory duplicity on this particular Bill. Rather than trying to defend the Crow rate and trying to defend prairie farmers, many of the Tories, although not all of them, are limiting their attack to the process, which process I must say is somewhat less than good.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I know about both the Crow and the statutory rate. I support both.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sargeant: At least I have made a conversion here, Mr. Speaker. I was also interested in his defence of the Port of Churchill and I am glad that he has been converted on that issue as well. I would remind him that it was only about three and a half years ago during the time of the Conservative Government that another Manitoba Member, the Member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta), for whom I have a great deal of respect on many issues, headed up a task force whose recommendations would have led to the demise of the Port of Churchill. I am glad to see that the Conservatives are now supporting the Port of Churchill, and that is very admirable.

I now speak to Bill C-155, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: That is a good idea.

Mr. Sargeant: Is that a good idea? Thank you, Mr. Speaker, a belief which I tend to agree with which has reached almost mythological status in western Canada is that the present Government and the Liberal Party in general are ignorant of what is going on in western Canada. During the last few weeks ever since the Pepin-Gilson proposals were introduced in the House, during Question Period Members from both Opposition Parties have questioned the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) or the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) or whoever about the wisdom and the specifics of the Pepin-Gilson proposal, and I have been surprised and astonished by the smugness of some of the backbench Liberals, people who would not know No. 1 Northern from stinkweed. I have been surprised at how smug

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they are and how much they seem to believe that they know what is best for western Canada.

Mr. Breau: The Hon. Member does not hesitate to speak about other parts of the country.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: It is a good thing that somebody speaks for eastern Canada because the Hon. Member surely does not.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Sargeant: I would put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Government is really not very concerned about the welfare of prairie farmers. The Liberal Government has only two seats west of the Ontario border, it has few votes and it is going down.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please. There appears to be two debates going on at the same time. The Hon. Member for Selkirk-Interlake has the floor.

Mr. Sargeant: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Government is going in exactly the wrong direction if it hopes to win friends in western Canada with this Bill. If it is really interested in the national unity of the country, it will treat prairie farmers or indeed all farmers with the same kind of respect that it treats Bay Street bankers and railway executives. I must admit that I am glad that the Government has found a little bit of sense and withdrawn, at least for the time being, its closure motion.

To date, the whole procedure followed by the Government has shown a colossal disregard and disrespect for the parliamentary process. This Bill will have a greater impact on prairie farmers than has almost any other Bill that has been passed in the history of the House. The impact on the rest of the country will be profound. To attempt to ram the Bill through Parliament in a few weeks is an insult to the House and to Canadians in general. To have brought in closure on the third day of debate, Mr. Speaker, is inexcusable. Thank God the Government was able to dig deep enough to find at least a little bit of decency and a little bit of respect for Canadian farmers and has temporarily withdrawn its closure motion.

The whole process has stunk for a number of years. The railway companies have been crying poor for years. These largest of corporate welfare bums have been trying to get their stricky fingers into the Government's cookie jar once again. Yesterday we heard my friend, the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin), tell the House that now, at a time when the railways claim they do not have enough money to develop the rail system in western Canada, they can find \$370 million to buy up American railways. That is scandalous, Mr. Speaker.

In recent years we have seen a former Minister of Transport, the former Member for Saskatoon East, sell out his western birthright by advocating the removal of the Crow. What happened to him when he next went to the polls after he had shown his true colours on the Crow rate? One would have thought that the Government might have learned a lesson from