

Motor Vehicle Transport Act, 1986

looking to chaos in its airline industry, which is the situation that appears very much to be developing. I and my Party stand in opposition to this Bill. It is not the prescription for the development of a healthy decentralized Canadian economy. It is a prescription for more centralization under the control of our neighbours to the south.

Mr. Baker: Mr. Speaker, will the hon. gentleman comment on the effects this Bill will have on trucking companies in the more rural areas of Canada—

Mr. Epp (Provencher): As opposed to less rural ones?

Mr. Baker: As opposed to the more urban populated areas of Canada. Will there be a drastic effect on the local trucker in northern Ontario?

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member represents a remote, mainly rural area of this country, as I do. In fact, when I read a recent newspaper account of the difficulties he faced in getting around his riding personally, they seem to reflect very much my own experience. We must have a bragging match on that point.

The obvious conclusion on the fate of the trucker in remote or rural areas is, first, that the prime routes into remote areas that involve steady hauls and reasonable bulk of commodities will be taken up by the larger companies. They will be taken up by companies that will eventually be swallowed by large multinational companies controlled by the United States.

There may be phases when local trucking in rural areas flourishes to a limited degree. That is a possibility we cannot overlook because in a developing market where there is a local trucker who has the intelligence and initiative to take advantage of that local market, presumably he or she will become the first to serve it. There may be a period of time in which that trucker will reap a reasonable return for that route.

However, we must remember that the logical corollary of that type of opportunity is that the larger firms, with their commercial intelligence operations, contacts, and ability to gather information through the analysis of statistical reports provided by the Government, will identify those opportunities when they grow beyond the level of a one or two-truck operation. At that point in a deregulated environment they will be able to enter the market and offer whatever price they want to get the business that has been developed and essentially take the market from the small local competitor. They will have the opportunity to either drive that competitor into bankruptcy or purchase the assets of that competitor, often at a very reduced price, and incorporate them into their own wider operation.

These are the risks and perils for the remote areas of this country. The consequences will be higher prices for such things as groceries, furniture, appliances, building materials and everything else that is trucked into the remote areas of Canada.

• (1750)

Mr. Angus: I wonder if I could put a question to my colleague? I listened with interest to his very excellent presentation to the House on Bill C-19, but there was one area the Hon. Member did not touch upon. Because of my knowledge of his riding, and I think the awareness of the whole country, I wanted to ask what happens when a transport truck gets into difficulty on the Trans-Canada Highway, as happened a couple of years ago, not in terms of a road accident *per se*, but in terms of the leakage of PCBs along that highway.

In a deregulated environment where safety has gone the way of decisions to pay the banker instead of putting a new set of tires on the truck, what would an accident of a fairly serious nature of a transport truck on the section of the Trans-Canada Highway between, say, the Manitoba border and the community of Kenora, do to the security of our system in terms of our ability to move goods from east to west?

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, the situation of blockages of the Trans-Canada Highway is one which is relatively familiar to the residents of my riding of Kenora—Rainy River. The Trans-Canada Highway has been blocked over the years for many reasons. Sometimes a truck hits a moose, goes out of control and straddles the entire highway. At other times a forest fire or a blizzard can close the highway for days, even up to a week at a time. Of course, the example, given by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan (Mr. Angus), was potentially one of the most serious incidents by which the Trans-Canada Highway was blocked.

When we have small undercapitalized operators in the trucking business—and that is a situation which deregulation must surely encourage, and I believe the Government has intended to encourage—then we will have situations like the trucking company which trucked the still PCB-laden transformers from Quebec to the Nisku Industrial Park in Alberta which was the eventual intended destination. That company folded its tent. It did not pay its fine and did not appear in court to defend itself against the suits brought against it. We were left in a situation where the Province of Ontario had to pay the cost of the clean-up and had no opportunity to collect from the polluter, in effect, the cost of that clean-up.

If a properly regulated environment had determined that the carrier of those dangerous goods had not only complied with all the safety procedures for the shipment of those goods, but had also complied with all the bonding and insurance provisions, and had posted adequate security for the safe movement of those goods—and this would be the situation with responsible re-regulation of the trucking industry—society as a whole and the Exchequer of the Province of Ontario would have been properly protected.

It is my belief, and I think the experience of the United States would bear it out, that in the unregulated, deregulated environment the Government is proposing in this Bill, the