

become better known in the area that I represent as the Crow Bill. The motion itself, which was presented by our Party, seeks to delete Clause 17(4) of the Bill which states:

(4) The Administrator, on behalf of the Minister, may enter into agreements to provide for the movement of grain by motor vehicle transport where, in his opinion, such agreements would be in the best interests of the grain producers.

While this may sound acceptable, when one analyses this clause further it causes some concern. First, the best interests of the grain producers are to be judged by some Administrator whom the Liberals want to be responsible to the Cabinet. I could perhaps agree with this provision if the best interests of the grain producers had been protected up to this point, but I do not think this Liberal bag Government has protected the interests of the producers. In fact, their interest have been eroded. Otherwise, why would we be even debating this Bill in terms of the content that specifically refers to the statutory rate or the removal of the Crow rate on which western Canada has come to rely for so many years to keep farming viable and which we really felt is part of our Confederation bargain?

I really question whether the Government ever had the best interests of the grain producers at heart. If it did and had demonstrated so in the past, perhaps I could agree with leaving this clause within Bill C-155. We have heard some talk this afternoon that it would be the large trucking companies which would benefit from this. That may be so. There should be some subsidy given to people who have to truck grain through no fault of their own. By moving to delete this part of the Bill, I am not against grain producers or small independent truckers. There are areas within my constituency where there is a need for more fair and equitable treatment of farmers who have to get their grain to market through the existing elevator system. I could think of places like Goodsoil in my constituency where producers and farmers have to truck grain in some cases 45 miles to the nearest elevators. Why do they do that? They do it because there is no rail line in the area which could be used to get the grain out.

● (1650)

As I mentioned in earlier speeches on Bill C-155, there are other areas in my constituency where elevators are plugged for a good part of the year. The rail transportation system is so bad that the elevators are plugged because the grain is not moved out when it is supposed to be. Farmers who want to haul grain to the elevators find they cannot do so because the elevators are plugged. The rail into the Meadow Lake delivery point, the steel and track, is in such a state of bad repair that they cannot take in hopper cars, load them fully and haul them back out.

If this clause contained conditions that were in the best interests of grain producers, I would not support the amendment, but I feel I have to support it because such conditions are not outlined in the Bill. We are being asked to rely on the Government to protect the best interests of grain producers. I would never do that on behalf of grain producers in my constituency because the Government has not demonstrated in its past performance, that it has protected the interests of producers. It has not demonstrated it through the Farm Credit

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Corporation, rail transportation or preservation of the statutory rate. Why should we suddenly trust the Administration responsible to Cabinet for transportation to enter into agreements in the best interests of producers? I just do not think it will happen.

If conditions were included in the Bill in the best interests of individual farmers, such as my cousin in Meadow Lake who has a semi-trailer and sometimes hauls grain great distances because he cannot sell it in The Meadow Lake with its poor transportation system, then I would agree with them. If small local contractors, who are farmers by definition, have semi-trailers and haul grain for their neighbours and friends, they should be able to obtain the benefit of subsidization for helping their neighbours and for displaying business incentive to subsidize their farming incomes, because most farms in western Canada are in a shambles right now. In the case of small independent truckers, I could see it happening where it was absolutely necessary because of the terrible condition of the grain transportation system in western Canada, particularly in the constituency I represent. Grain companies through the co-ordination system cannot get the cars in there to move the grain. When they do, the rails are not in a good enough state of repair to get the fully loaded cars out.

All Hon. Members should realize that with a good and efficient rail transportation system there would be no need to truck grain any farther than the closest delivery point, which should be only a few miles away. Farmers should be able to haul their product to elevators when they need money and have the time to do so. This does not happen right now. Has it been in the best interest of producers for the rail transportation system to have deteriorated to its present condition, as we have seen over the years? I do not think we can buy the argument saying that it is in the best interests of producers.

If those conditions are not included in the Bill, what will happen to the grain Administrator who will be answerable to Cabinet and to the federal Liberal Government opposite? It will not be the people in Goodsoil who will benefit, those people who have to truck their grain right now. It will not be to the benefit of little independent truckers, whether they be full-time in the trucking business or part-time farmers/truckers. I maintain that it will benefit the larger trucking companies. Maybe Maislin will be out in Saskatchewan trucking grain pretty soon.

Mr. Towers: No thanks.

Mr. Anguish: It seems to have ripped off enough from the federal Government. I hear a Member to my right saying, "No thanks". I agree with him. Maislin can stay the heck out of our Territory, tearing up our roads, ripping off and leeching off Canadian taxpayers. We do not want them leeching off prairie farmers as well.

There is a fairly large trucking company in The Meadow Lake which just sold out to Canadian Pacific Transport. The deal will become effective within the next month or so. It is good that that local businessman was able to develop his company and finally sell it when it was in his best interests to