

Transportation

cannot carry on this business of moving grain efficiently.

I should like to suggest to the minister that if he wishes to clear up the doubt which exists in the minds of the railway users, he should remove this section from the bill. I can see no reason for it. He said that the purpose is to protect the Churchill rates. If this is so, then I would suggest that it should be stated in simple English that the intent is to protect the rates at Churchill, and that is it. Then everyone would be able to understand it.

Earlier I used a phrase which apparently irritated the minister a little. I am going to repeat myself and say again that I think it is the thin edge of the wedge to open the door so that this can be reviewed. It could go on for 10 or 20 years, but eventually this is the one part of the legislation which could open the door so that some time in the years ahead some railway will come along and say this is the loophole they are looking for.

I say that we should abolish this section. I know the minister is anxious to co-operate so that we can get along with this legislation, and we certainly wish to co-operate with him. I believe this is one instance in which there could be a little co-operation. I am a farmer and I believe I speak for the farmers when I say that there are two clauses in this bill which the farmers do understand and those are the clauses which pertain to rail line abandonments and the Crowsnest pass rates. These two clauses are vitally important to every farmer, producer and businessman in western Canada who has anything whatsoever to with the farm economy.

Mr. Chairman, I should like to conclude my remarks by repeating that I believe the minister, who apparently has a good deal of faith in this section, should cut this down and say "This is it", in plain and simple language, so that there can be no doubt between black and white. When one mixes up all the colours it becomes difficult to distinguish any colour. This is the reason I say there is something wrong with this section and this is why I say it should be completely deleted.

Mr. Fane: Mr. Chairman, I had hoped that it would not be necessary for me to speak on the subject of the Crowsnest pass agreement. The minister, however, has not seen fit to withdraw new section 329 subsection 1 of clause 50, and, therefore I find it necessary for me to say a few words. I speak as a prairie farmer from the province of Alberta. It is amazing to me that the minister has not seen fit to withdraw this section. He holds the distinction of

somehow being a quasi-westerner. He lived there for a little while and said that he was raised on a farm. One might wonder, however, what has happened to his perspective.

There are things involved in the Crowsnest pass agreement which I have not heard mentioned by any of the eloquent speakers who have preceded me. I thought the minister would have paid attention to such eloquent addresses as those delivered by the hon. members for Rosthern, Mackenzie, Acadia, Jasper-Edson, Moose Jaw-Lake Centre, Winnipeg South Assiniboia and other hon. members who have spoken but whose addresses my other duties did not permit me to hear. However, the minister is sticking to this new section which appears in this bill. Western farmers believe that the Crowsnest pass agreement was bought and paid for and was supposed to last forever. There was an agreement with the Canadian Pacific Railway which was supposed to continue in perpetuity. This agreement was bought and paid for when a large section of land in the three prairie provinces was turned over to the Canadian Pacific Railway, along with the mineral and petroleum rights in respect of it. That was supposed to be the payment for this concession to the farmers of western Canada. The Canadian Pacific Railway has made millions, millions and millions of dollars as a result of that payment. No one can tell me that they have not received adequate payment. I say they have received sufficient payment to have the Crowsnest pass agreement remain in effect in perpetuity.

There is one thing which seems to have been overlooked. I should like to quote from the statement the minister made last night. This statement appears at the bottom of the first column on page 11,868 of *Hansard* for January 16. He said:

The plain fact is that I do not think any member of this house, if he were to stop to reflect, would be doing the cause of the western farmer any good by suggesting that other freight shippers should have to pay higher freight in order to lower the rates on wheat.

What in the name of heaven is the minister talking about? Has no one told him that the farmer, when he delivers the grain which he has grown, whether wheat, oats, barley, flax, rye, or what have you, pays—in the area where I live—a freight rate of 26 cents per 100 pounds in advance for this grain to be hauled either to Vancouver or Fort William? This is the rate he has to pay, regardless of whether it is being moved by the C.N.R. or the C.P.R. Both railways go through the town