

Western Grain Transportation Act

negative vote on Motion No. 48 will require the question being put on Motion No. 49.

Motion No. 51 appears to the Chair to be beyond the scope of the Bill as voted at second reading; and further, it appears to infringe on the financial initiative of the Crown and thus should not be proceeded with.

● (1120)

Motions Nos. 50, 52 and 53 should be grouped for debate. Motion No. 50 should be voted on separately and a vote on Motion No. 52 will dispose of Motion No. 53.

Motion No. 54 appears to the Chair to be beyond the scope of the Bill, as is Motion No. 57.

Motions Nos. 55 and 56 should be debated together but voted on separately.

It is my intention to give Hon. Members an opportunity to speak to the procedural regularity of the motions which I have just noted. Members may wish to have this discussion later and, if so, I suggest we now proceed to the first acceptable motion, which is Motion No. 24 standing in the name of the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin).

I am setting these 20-some motions aside. This is a preliminary ruling. At first reading of them, as I say, the Chair has misgivings about them. However, there has not been time to look into them in more detail and to mount the arguments and precedents which would support my decision. Therefore, that is the reason I am setting them aside and asking Hon. Members also to reflect on these preliminary arguments that I have given the House so that when the time comes and I am ready to give a more considered opinion on these amendments, we can then enter into the procedural debate if there is a need to have such procedural debate. I will be ready to rule on the remaining motions either tomorrow or Monday, at which time the procedural debate could take place.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I thank you for the consideration you have given to the question of calling for submissions as to procedural regularity at a later time. Having regard to the fact that the entire first page of your statement and the entire second page, except for the last paragraph thereof, and Motions Nos. 51, 54 and 57 on page 4 of your statement, are all motions with which the Chair has some concern—and I think you will agree that it is a considerable number that give the Chair concern—my only concern now is your stated intention to make a ruling tomorrow or Monday. That may not give us enough time to consider the concerns and make the submissions that we may wish to make.

In the meantime, however, the remaining portion of Your Honour's statement has opened enough motions which the Chair considers to be regular to allow debate, certainly to carry on today, tomorrow and Monday, and perhaps the Chair might consider a greater degree of leniency before making a definitive ruling either tomorrow or Monday. I do not know how much time we need, but we will certainly try to be ready by Monday. We certainly will not be ready by tomorrow, but we may be ready by Monday, given the weekend. However, if

we need more time, I may wish to ask for it at a later stage in the debate.

Madam Speaker: I do not disagree with that. I think it would accommodate the Table officers considerably if Hon. Members would accept that I not rule tomorrow, because they do need the time and they are working through the night to do these things. I would therefore be quite prepared to leave it at least until Monday, at which time I think I could give the House some indication of our thinking on most of these amendments. Then we could determine when the procedural debate could take place.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I fully agree with the comments of the House Leader for the Official Opposition. I am concerned, however, that the scope of the rulings today, preliminary though they are, covers such a multitude of different amendments and topics that it will be extremely difficult for people adequately to analyse both those and others which I believe to be of concern to many of us.

● (1125)

I was wondering whether it might not be more appropriate if the Government were to go ahead with some other business today and allow the Chair and the Opposition the opportunity to review the whole question of the appropriateness of amendments and prepare for discussion on them.

Quite clearly, the amendments that are being ruled upon, even in a preliminary way, not only touch upon amendments from the Opposition but also amendments that the Government may feel have some substantive requirement for its purposes. I would ask whether it might not be appropriate simply to call another order and allow that this be dealt with properly, rather than in a staged and haphazard way.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, with regard to this particular point, I think the suggestion made by the Hon. House Leader for the Conservative Party is by far the appropriate technique to follow. We recognize that there are a number of very critical amendments that should be allowed further review and, as he said, further submissions. The suggestion made by the House Leader of the NDP I believe would just be delaying further what is a very critical and important piece of legislation. Therefore, we would certainly be prepared to follow the proposal put forward by the House Leader of the Conservative Party and support his submission that perhaps further time can be taken to examine those amendments on which you would like further review. But we would hope that we could proceed with the amendments that are already acceptable and start today forthwith.

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Madam Speaker, I too agree with the proposal put forward by the House Leader for the Official Opposition. I myself would like to have a little time to look at some of the rulings you have made. I have some idea of the complexity of the report and I am not surprised that you call into question some of the amendments that were made because there was much lively