

the Maritime Freight Rates Act so far as intra-traffic is concerned.

The minister's proposal, whereby ten members can provoke a debate on an order made under clause 5, will give the house an opportunity to debate any reduction of rates under the Maritime Freight Rates Act, although I would point out that this provision already exists in the law. Now, we will maintain some type of control, and will have a forum in which to discuss this type of change.

• (9:20 p.m.)

So far as the other two amendments are concerned, with respect to the amount of assistance I still hope that we do not get into a situation where the amount saved is a decreasing amount, so that three or four years from now there may not be any savings made on one section to be used in a supplemental way as suggested by the minister. We suggested a one year time limit, and in fact I submitted a draft to this effect to the minister. It is essential that the minister continue to show the initiative in bringing this matter up to date and preparing comprehensive plans for legislation on Atlantic transportation.

On the basis that this bill must be passed to eliminate the discrimination that now exists against truckers, we on this side are prepared to agree to these amendments. I believe the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador wishes to make some further comment on the question of the island of Newfoundland versus the province of Newfoundland, but so far as this party is concerned we hope that this legislation will be passed tonight.

Mr. Skoberg: Mr. Chairman, we in this party are now much more ready to accept this particular amendment. It will mean that we in parliament will still have some control. So far as the situation in Labrador is concerned, our position has always been that any assistance given under the Maritime Freight Rates Act should directly assist the user of a facility.

Mr. Peddle: Mr. Chairman, on the previous occasion that this bill was before committee of the whole I expressed my concern that, while it is entitled an act to authorize assistance to transportation in the Atlantic region, it specifically excludes the Labrador part of the province of Newfoundland. Clause 2(c) provides that any consideration under the act so far as Newfoundland is concerned applies only to the island of Newfoundland. The

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other three Atlantic provinces, Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and New Brunswick are included in their entirety, and the portion of Quebec which I suppose can be considered as an Atlantic region is also included. I might say I have been given to understand that in the new bill the portion of Quebec stipulated is considerably larger than that taken into consideration in the Maritime Freight Rates Act, as printed in the revised statutes of Canada, 1952.

Approximately 110,000 square miles of my province, incidentally all in my riding, are deliberately excluded from the provisions of this legislation. The minister answered my objection by making reference to the terms of union between Newfoundland and Canada. I cannot see the relevancy of that argument. The terms of union state:

For the purpose of railway rate regulation the Island of Newfoundland will be included in the Maritime region of Canada—

All legislation of the Parliament of Canada providing for special rates on traffic moving within, into, or out of, the Maritime region will, as far as appropriate, be made applicable to the Island of Newfoundland.

But, Mr. Chairman, the terms of union also clearly define the province of Newfoundland, as follows:

The Province of Newfoundland shall comprise the same territory as at the date of Union, that is to say, the Island of Newfoundland and the Islands adjacent thereto, the coast of Labrador as delimited in the report delivered by the Judicial Committee ... on the first day of March, 1927—

I do not really want to delay the minister's legislation but as the elected representative of the riding of Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador I cannot come into this chamber and see legislation, purporting to assist transportation in the Atlantic region, go through when the area of Labrador I represent is specifically excluded from the terms of that legislation.

The biggest problems in Labrador are transportation and communications. Transportation is the only real problem in the industrialized areas of Labrador. Therefore, I cannot buy a bill such as this which excludes Labrador. Mr. Chairman, I know there are no roads in Labrador right now, but in one of my first speeches in this chamber I supported the idea of the provision of a road system in Labrador. When roads are provided, the subsidy available through this bill could be an incentive to develop Labrador.

I know the minister is trying to be co-operative but I still cannot help but feel that Labrador is being treated as an orphan, to which a few crumbs may be thrown. I cannot