

Western Grain Transportation Act

packsacks than is even the case with trucks. However, he did not go that far.

I think that the trucking argument has been carried to this ultimate, ridiculous point, and we should not be fooled into thinking that trucks have any place in forming real competition for rails in the transportation system. As I pointed out earlier, trucks do have a place in the movement from farm to rail and should continue to be used that way.

Mr. Thacker: That's the point.

Mr. Althouse: "That is the point", the Hon. Member says. However, it has nothing to do with the amendment that we have before us.

Mr. Thacker: Sure it has.

Mr. Althouse: It has none, because there is nothing in the Act or any of the testimony we have heard from the witnesses concerning the provision of any funds for those kinds of trucking operations. The only kind of trucking operation that is being discussed here under the Administrator is the kind that would move grain from one elevator to another. It would be transshipping, an unnecessary kind of trucking, because the grain must be trucked, initially, from the farm to the elevator in any case. Why not send it to the elevator where it will end up being transshipped on to an elevator instead of having a second unnecessary stop in the interval? Motion No. 35 which we have proposed will deal with this, and we will get to that next.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order. The Hon. Member for Lethbridge-Foothills.

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills): Mr. Speaker, I could not let the Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre (Mr. Althouse) continue with his misleading statements, trying to alarm people out on the western Prairies unduly by saying that the rail will be stripped up between Calgary and Vancouver, because that is what he was saying.

Mr. Althouse: Who said that?

Mr. Thacker: He was saying—

Mr. Althouse: I did not. I pointed out that it did not have place in competition.

Mr. Thacker:—that for a 120-car or 120-car trip to Vancouver, there would have to be over 300 trucks, implying that that is what the motion means. It is sheer nonsense.

Mr. Althouse: We are just extending Tory logic. It is sheer nonsense.

Mr. Thacker: The Hon. Member has now admitted that his speech was sheer nonsense and that he was trying to waste time.

Mrs. Mitchell: Your argument was.

Mr. Thacker: That is the only thing he has said in the last six months with which I agree, that he speaks nonsense most of the time.

On the one hand the Hon. Member was saying that we were going to use trucks but, on the other hand, that we need to have trains. He wants to protect the monopoly of the CPR to haul grain to the West Coast. Clearly, from those central collection points, that is exactly what will happen because one cannot beat steel on those long hauls. However, what we are discussing, and what Clause 17(3) and the amendment that was accepted deal with, is the branch line collection system. Even under the Crow rate, half of those villages mentioned by the Hon. Member were disappearing in any event. My own home village was going, under the Crow, because things have happened which the New Democratic Party just does not appreciate. Trucks have come on the scene. We have better tractors and other machinery. We have good highways now. People like to go to larger centres. We are now becoming an urban society rather than a rural society. The dinosaurs in the NDP are trying to maintain a system that was designed for the horse and buggy, where there was an elevator every nine miles. Now the efficient collection points should be every 30 or 40 miles.

The one thing the Hon. Member did mention that was correct concerned the international marketplace. If we maintain railways on these branch collection systems, we will not be able to put a bushel of grain at tidewater to compete with the Americans, the Australians or the Argentinians, because they are going to these collection centres. The idea is to get one's grain to a centre like that in the most efficient way possible. Sometimes it will be by railways, if one happens to be in a part of a country that can justify the cost of a railway. In other places, it will be by trucks to haul into a central location. We could then have 110-car spots or 52-car spots that could be loaded, the grain could be cleaned there, it could go to the West Coast and be dumped strictly on to a ship, and those cars could be back in seven days. That is what is being done in the United States. There one can put a bushel of grain at tidewater far cheaper than we can. Interestingly enough, the railway can give the farmer a saving, a rate that is 14 cents cheaper per bushel, of which the farmer can keep 8 cents, because it only costs him 6 cents to send it with his truck. What an amazing thing is that, 8 cents in the farmer's pocket! He could go out and buy cars and trucks that are produced by our fellow Canadians. However, the NDP wants it to go to the railway because, for some reason, it wants the shareholders of the CPR to get richer. We know what it really wants with regard to its long-term strategy. It ultimately wants to have the railways so powerful that they can be nationalized. Members of the NDP think that they will be in Cabinet and make decisions to force the railway to do this and do that. Of course, as the Liberals have found out when they tried to do that to the energy industry, \$14 billion left the country. Half of the unemployed people could be working today if it were not for the National Energy Program and the concentration of power. So, Members of the NDP can ruin the country. They will keep the Liberals