

Movement of Grain

with this kind of blackmail. It is time to legislate the railroads back to work.

The way to get railroads to move grain is not to cave in to their blackmail, but to make them live up to their statutory and historic obligations to provide service. The government can and should require the railroads to add 4,000 new hopper cars, for which they pay, and 5,000—although I would prefer 6,000—repaired boxcars to their grain fleet.

The addition of 4,000 new hopper cars would generate more than \$700 million a year in additional foreign sales and foreign exchange for Canada. Therefore, this would not benefit only the grain producers. It would benefit the nation as a whole.

Handing the railroads more money and more hopper cars will not guarantee better service. Surely the minister has been double-crossed enough times to realize that. Grain rates in the United States are more than four times as high as those in Canada, yet they have a chronic shortage of grain cars. In fact they keep trying to use as many of ours as they can. They have a grain movement or railway system that has broken down even worse than our own.

The governments must require the railroads to provide service. The Canadian Transport Commission, which is under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Transport, has that authority under Section 262 of the Railway Act. Why is it not being enforced? Section 262 reads:

The company shall, according to its powers,

- (b) furnish adequate and suitable accommodation for the carrying, unloading and delivering of all such traffic;
- (c) without delay, and with due care and diligence, receive, carry and deliver all such traffic;
- (d) furnish and use all proper appliances, accommodation and means necessary for receiving, loading, carrying, unloading and delivering such traffic; and
- (e) furnish such other service incidental to transportation as is customary or usual in connection with the business of a railway company, as may be ordered by the commission.

The authority is in the law now. Why is the Canadian Transport Commission not enforcing the law? Why is the Minister of Transport, who is in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board, not calling upon the Canadian Transport Commission on behalf of Canada and the Canadian grain producers, to enforce the law which requires the railroads to furnish adequate and suitable accommodation for the carrying, unloading and delivering of all traffic?

The railroads have been treated very generously. They receive \$160 million a year in branch line subsidies. They have been given the use of 8,000 hopper cars with which to haul grain. They have been promised something in the order of \$700 million over the next eight years to fix up their railroad lines.

Mr. Justice Hall said, "Stop giving out gifts." He said giving \$600 million to the railroads is totally unjustified. He said the railroads should continue to charge the Crow rate for moving grain, and any losses they incur for that service should be paid directly to them by the Government of Canada on behalf of the people of Canada. We support that basic and fundamental recommendation of the Hall royal commission.

[Mr. Benjamin.]

The statutory grain rate is not some handout or subsidy to western grain producers. It is an essential tool for this nation through the Canadian Wheat Board, to compete with other exporting countries, to allow Canada to place its grain in export position in competition with other grain exporting nations. Any other benefits to the statutory grain rates are ancillary to that basic fundamental principle, the reason for having statutory grain rates.

If there are proven losses in the transport of grain under the statutory rates, we agree with Mr. Justice Hall that, since the nation as a whole benefits from these massive grain export sales, the nation as a whole has an obligation to share in the costs that are incurred in arriving at these benefits.

Mr. Justice Hall also said the railways must be made responsible once the first recommendation that I mentioned has been accomplished. They must be made responsible to use that money to buy grain cars and to fix up their track. The Hall report has provided a framework within which the Canadian Wheat Board and the country elevator system could serve this country even better than they have for many years.

Mr. Justice Hall also recommended that the Canadian Wheat Board be given a greater role in coordinating the movement of grain. He said the railroads must be required, and the minister can do this, to give the Wheat Board all the information the board needs. At present the Wheat Board is not even provided with the serial numbers of individual railway cars in the grain fleet. The Wheat Board therefore cannot check on where the cars are.

The Wheat Board knows how to coordinate the movement of grain. It can look at the whole system, from the farmers' yard to the country elevator system, to the ships in the harbour where the grain is loaded. It knows the kind and quality of grain needed at each terminal to fill waiting boats.

I have not said anything about waiting boats. That problem is not peculiar to Canada. It occurs in all grain exporting nations. Any time there are 15 or 20 ships waiting in Vancouver harbour, you will find either the same or a worse situation in Sydney, or Melbourne, Australia; in New Zealand, Seattle, or Buenos Aires. There is nothing unusual about it. The government through the Minister of Transport and the Canadian Wheat Board, should be getting together with other exporting countries to have some kind of co-ordination in the movement of marine shipping which presently, in my opinion, is operated like a bunch of gangsters.

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The Wheat Board needs to be given exclusive authority to market feed grains. In 1974 the minister, with the support of the Conservatives, took that power away from the board and, as a result, the parasites who speculate on the farmers' labour have gained, and the farmers have got less.

The result of this for our transportation system this year will be near disaster unless something is done to remedy the situation. There are no quotas restricting delivery of non board feed grains. The delivery system has been plugged, forcing the Wheat Board to allocate cars, not to move grain to Vancouver