

*Extension of Hours*

disposition of the Dominion coal lands. We would be prepared to deal with all of those things and more between now and June 30.

However, we are not prepared to sell out the farmers of western Canada simply to expedite the vacation plans of Members of the House of Commons. I put that to you as clearly as I can. I have made every possible attempt to have the Government recognize the necessity of splitting Bill C-155 which is before us. On behalf of my caucus colleagues I have offered every co-operation in expediting this large and quite diverse range of topics which the Government wants to deal with in the form of legislation. But the Government is bound and determined that it will stuff a changed Crow rate down our throats. We are equally determined that it will not. That is where we are hung up.

The Government knows full well that if that change to the Crow rate receives second reading it will be stuck through the committee with the speed of light while Government Members nod "Aye, ready, aye, ready". It will be brought back to the House of Commons where the Government will bring in time allocation and jam it into law before one can blink an eye. We know that because we have worked with this Government before.

I suggest to the Conservatives not to be persuaded by all of the Government's promises about giving fair opportunity to the farmers of western Canada to have their say. Do not succumb to the charm of the Government and its House Leader. The Government is not only intent upon imposing this unnecessary hardship on the farmers whom we represent but, strange though it may seem, it is intent on doing that to the farmers whom the Conservatives also represent. It is time they understood that. It is time that the Conservative Members stood up firmly and said, "No, the farmers of western Canada cannot afford to take on that additional burden". It is time that the Conservatives joined in this battle and made it clear to the Government that the changes it is proposing to the Crow rate will make it virtually impossible for western grain farmers to enter into the world markets that are so vital to their survival. In fact, the proposed changes which the Government has put forward will work a terrible hardship on the western economy.

I say to the Conservative Members, the three who are here, that I have never understood how the Conservative Party could get on to its knees so quickly before the Government on this matter. As my colleague says, even their new Leader supports the changes to the Crow, I believe. It tells us something about what his priorities are.

I want to say to the Conservative Members that it is just not enough to say that they have to trust the Government to do things properly. That is not enough. The Liberal Party has never understood western Canada. It does not understand western Canada now. Therefore, how can they put the economy of Canada's Prairies at its mercy with a haste which is almost obscene?

• (1610)

The reason we are opposed to extending the hours is not that we do not want to work and deal with the legislation before us. It is because we do not want to facilitate the Government's desire to push through and make law immediately the Bill dealing with exorbitant increases to the Crow rate. We do not want to see it become law. We want to ensure that there is time for sober second thought across the land. We want to ensure that by holding the Bill in the House of Commons the farming community of the West, together with its allies, will have adequate time to reach Government Members when they return to their constituencies. When they get back into their constituencies, they will be hard to reach, but we want to ensure that there is time and an opportunity for western grain farmers and others concerned about the issue to reach Government Members, as they must also reach Tory Members, so that they will accept the fact that a third of the Bill about which we talk will add so much to the burden of costs of farmers in the west and that those changes should not and need not become law.

I know Mr. Speaker studies these matters. He knows as I know that every country against which we compete for the sale of grain in the world subsidizes their grain farmers. It was only months ago that we read that Argentina, as I recall, had eliminated the cost of transportation from grain-growing areas to the port. They eliminated them entirely in order to bring down the price of their product and undercut the Canadian market. When we look at that, when we look at the vast subsidies in the United States for transportation purposes, and when we look at Canada, which is about to add to the costs of farmers who are already having a tough enough time competing, it makes no sense. Because it makes no sense, it therefore must be stopped. Because it must be stopped, we must therefore use every effort available to stop it.

I ask Conservatives, for God's sake, to pluck up their courage, come aboard and join with us in trying to stop this juggernaut from running all over the country and destroying the very soul of the West. I just cannot believe it. Anyway, as I say, we do not want to see the extension of hours—and I supported the motion of the Opposition House Leader—for other than dealing with additional pieces of legislation which the Government brought forward.

Again I say to the Government, with some trepidation because I know what it means, that we will do everything in our power to stop the Crow. We will stop those changes because they are wrong. We will do whatever we must to ensure that they never become law. If it means sitting through July, it means sitting through July. If it means sitting through August, it means sitting through August. If it means sitting until midnight, it means sitting until midnight. If it means holding Government Members here until September, October or November, until farmers have been able to convince them how wrong they are, that is what it means. I assure the House that it will mean that every Liberal will have to be here, every one of them, in order to ensure that the Government gets what it wants, its ill-conceived objectives.