

should like to deal with a few matters concerning clause 1 in a general way before we get down to specifics.

**The Chairman:** The theory is that the discussion should be restricted to clause 2 and the general discussion would be at the end, on clause 1. If the committee would like to reverse that procedure, I am in its hands; but that is the way I propose to approach the matter.

**Mr. Jamieson:** Mr. Chairman, in view of the hon. member's very real interest in this matter, I would welcome an opportunity to hear his general views, if the committee were so disposed.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chairman:** Then we will have a general discussion on clause 2.

On clause 2—*Definitions.*

**Mr. Nowlan:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister and the committee for their indulgence. I would like to compliment the minister upon his initiative in bringing forward Bill C-207. He has noted that the bill has special reference to the constituency I represent and to the larger constituency of the Atlantic area. As the minister and people in the Atlantic area know, matters have been sort of left in the air as far as special assistance and/or a freeze on freight rates are concerned. The late lamented Bill C-182 introduced earlier this session provoked more by way of adverse reaction than it did by way of the resolving of problems.

With regard to the general principle of Bill C-207, I am in favour of extending assistance to the truckers. Assistance provided under the Maritime Freight Rates Act applies only to the railways. This bill at least recognizes that other modes of transportation, and trucking in particular, should also receive assistance. This principle conforms with the reports of commissions which have studied the problem. I refer to the study of transportation problems in the Atlantic region, the economic units study and the Atlantic premiers task force. These bodies submitted their views on the question of Atlantic transportation to the then minister of transport, the hon. member for Trinity.

I do not want there to be any misunderstanding in this regard. We on this side of the house are not against assistance being given to the trucking industry. The railways have

in effect been favoured, and the truckers discriminated against, with subsidies from the federal government. I am disappointed however that Bill C-207 does not go far enough. I have read the minister's remarks of last Tuesday morning. That was another morning sitting. He said this is an interim measure and a more comprehensive plan would be developed and laid before parliament at a later date. On that understanding some of my disappointment is abated and diluted.

• (10:20 a.m.)

Hon. members who are not from the Atlantic area perhaps do not understand the particular problems there or the implications of the Maritime Freight Rates Act as it affects movement of freight both in and outside the Atlantic area. Quite frankly, there are many people in the Atlantic area involved in transportation who sometimes have difficulty, as do members of parliament, in understanding the full implications of the Maritime Freight Rates Act, which was enacted by parliament in 1927 and which, to the people in the east, is a confirmation of the undertakings that were given to the Atlantic area before they joined Confederation. We do not all have whiskers in the Atlantic area and we do not always talk about history, although we have many historic sites. I did not mention this historical fact for the purpose of simply narrating it but because, as the minister and as members from the Atlantic area are well aware, some members of this house have the mistaken impression that this is just another protest by the Atlantic area.

Although I admit that the federal government has not helped the Atlantic area with one or another handout, I wish to state categorically, in speaking about the general principle of the bill, that it does not follow the trend which was started by the Duncan commission away back in the 1920's and which is evident in the preamble of the Maritime Freight Rates Act of 1927, enacted some 60 years after Confederation. The Maritime Freight Rates Act was the real confirmation of the undertakings which induced the original four provinces to form this nation which now stretches from coast to coast.

It is in that context that we are speaking about Bill C-207. The Maritime Freight Rates Act gave assistance to the movement of rail traffic in what is known as the select territory. Generally speaking, the select territory is in the Atlantic area, but in effect it is territory south of the St. Lawrence and east of