

*Transportation*

this amendment is perhaps of only middling importance. However, if I may be so bold as to say so, I consider it to be of major significance because somewhere in this legislation someone must be specifically charged with the responsibility of making certain recommendations for remedial action to the appropriate authority when producers are faced with an increased cost of production because of an action taken under the provisions of this bill. This may also happen when a person or persons lose a considerable amount of investment which is tied to a railway location. This may also apply to municipal or provincial governments. Surely it would be quite fair and logical to charge someone with the responsibility of bringing to the attention of the Governor in Council or another appropriate authority, as the case may be, that because of a rail line abandonment the cost of providing alternative transportation facilities, in this case roads, may be likely to increase very substantially.

What I have in mind is that the commission may be faced with an application from the railways to abandon a given stretch of line and the railways may be able to show that they are losing, for example, \$500 or \$1,000 per rail mile.

On that basis presumably the commission would be disposed to grant approval of the abandonment. However, when submissions are made and it is demonstrated that the cost to the municipality, or jointly to the municipality and the province, of building a road may be in the order of \$25,000 or even \$30,000 per mile, this should be taken into consideration by the commission which should have someone to turn to in making a recommendation in this regard. The amendment would simply specify this direction to the commission for its particular attention.

May I say in closing that it is true that perhaps one could deduce this from the provisions of subsection 4 as now drafted but I see no harm in being more explicit. I should like to make one more point. The minister has a very disarming manner. He gives the members of this committee assurances upon assurances that this will really be done and that this was intended all along. But assurances from a kindhearted minister of the crown are not as binding, I understand, as statutory provisions.

**Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert):** He may not be minister for very long.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I am quite agreeable to accepting the amendment if that is the wish of the committee.

**The Chairman:** Shall the amendment carry?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause as amended agreed to.

**Mr. Schreyer:** May I point out to you, sir, that the hon. member for Kootenay West expressed a desire to speak on clause 42?

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Chairman, I have had a word with the hon. member for Kootenay West and he agreed to speak on clause 1 when we come back to it. It was agreed some time ago that all the new sections except 314D had been carried and that we would not reopen discussion on them.

On clause 50—

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** Mr. Chairman, I was very pleased to hear the minister say that he wanted to shorten the bill. I will offer him the opportunity to do just that. We heard a rather impractical and unusual speech by the minister last night, particularly from a minister who has some ties with western Canada.

With reference to new section 329 of clause 50 he indicated that a review of the Crowsnest pass rates will be undertaken every three years and he implied that it was his opinion and that of the government that the Crowsnest pass rates were not compensatory. He went to a great deal of trouble to buttress his argument with the recommendations of the MacPherson commission. As I have done before in the house, I referred him immediately to the reservations expressed by a member of the commission, Mr. Gobeil. They are entirely relevant and should be put on the record at this time. He said, as appears in the MacPherson commission report:

I cannot, however, accept the other commissioners' decision that a subsidy is required in order to compensate the railways for alleged deficits incurred on the carriage of grain and grain products to export positions. There are three reasons for my disagreement with this decision.

First, I believe that the Canadian Pacific Railway, having obtained certain very real advantages when it undertook—in perpetuity—to accept a ceiling on these grain rates, became party to a contract which is still in effect and which must be abided by.

I should like to say at this point that we in western Canada feel that this is a contract by which the C.P.R. and the other railway must continue to abide. We believe, in view of the fact we have an inviolable contract with the railways, that this is a redundant clause and