

Petitions

that western Canadian farmers paid \$131 million to move export grain under the Crow freight rate in the 1981-82 crop year. This grain in turn contributed \$6.3 billion to the balance of trade. The undersigned believe this is the farmers' fair contribution to the Canadian economy and that western farmers will pay one times the Crow, that is, no change. Wherefore, the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to maintain the present statutory grain Crow rate, and as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Madam Speaker: I hope Hon. Members will excuse me. I am quite ill and I would like to leave the chair. The Deputy Speaker will take the chair.

Mr. Chrétien: It's enough to make anybody sick.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: How can you even talk about democracy?

An Hon. Member: This is democracy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the people from the various communities in Saskatchewan who signed this petition will be impressed by the fact that the Government Members would not let them present the petition.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I ask Hon. Members to conform to the rules of the House. The Hon. Member may present the petition.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by various residents in different communities in Saskatchewan. As you know, many people in Saskatchewan ship their grain on the rail line to Churchill at the Crow rate. In their petition they beseech the House of Commons to maintain the present statutory grain rate. They believe that they contribute a lot to the Canadian economy. They pay their fair share for the cost of shipping grain in this country and they help the economy of this nation. They ask that the House of Commons not change the Crow rate.

● (1610)

[Translation]

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): I have the honour to present a very important petition which concerns the Crownest Pass rate. It was signed by 37 or 38 people from my home province, Saskatchewan.

[English]

It is a petition, Mr. Speaker, which concerns itself with variable rates and the importance of not abandoning the rail lines so important to serving the people of Saskatchewan and their shipments of grain. It concerns things like the Port of

Churchill which is so important to farmers in my part of Saskatchewan. The petition comes from many different towns, and what is noteworthy here is that all but three of these farmers are members of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. They are very active grass roots members—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Will the Hon. Member please state the petition and not describe the characteristics of the petitioners.

Mr. Nystrom: The petition says that the undersigned farmers of Canada are very, very concerned about variable rates. They are very concerned about the abandonment of rail lines, and that the Crow rate not change. They petition the Parliament of Canada to keep the Crow rate, that there be no change. They say that the farmers have already paid over \$100 million to move export grain to market and this grain in turn has contributed some \$6.3 billion to Canada's balance of trade. Because of that, they have asked me to present the petition, and I am honoured to do so.

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, I also have a petition to present to the House. It has some 36 signatures. The petitioners wish to point out to the House of Commons in Parliament assembled that they are all residents of Canada. In fact, most of them are from North Battleford, some indeed from Saskatoon, and from Battleford itself.

Mr. Peterson: Anguish is the Member from there.

Mr. Anguish: We traded petitions.

Mr. Peterson: You should not trade petitions.

Mr. Anguish: They were sent to him.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Regina East (Mr. de Jong) has the floor.

Mr. de Jong: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we could have some order in the House.

Mr. Peterson: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair will hear the point of order at the end of the Hon Member's presentation.

Mr. de Jong: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The petitioners say that western Canadian farmers paid \$131 million to move export grain under the Crow rate in the 1981-82 crop year, and that this grain in turn contributed some \$6.3 billion to the balance of trade. The petitioners believe this is the farmers' fair contribution to the Canadian economy and that western farmers will pay one times Crow, meaning no change. Wherefore, Mr. Speaker, the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to maintain the present statutory grain rate, meaning the Crow, and as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Peterson: Mr. Speaker, I humbly submit to you that it is an abuse of the process of this House when not only one