

Western Grain Transportation Act

cars, in terms of making sure that the system runs on behalf of the farmers of this land.

Motion No. 58 is a reference to a whole series of things. It talks about the Commission and the regulations that can be made and can be applied. You can go on and on and on. I refer to the many different items in detail that are repeated here in the motion that is before the House. As I said before, many of these things, not all, are referred to in the Railway Act or the National Transportation Act. I suppose that is why the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell), learned lawyer that he is, said this amendment is really a piece of fluff. I guess he means by that it is fluff because it is padded and is a repetition of something that is already in the statutes of the land. I guess that is also why he said in many ways it exposes the Conservatives' attitude toward the Crow. They are trying to have it both ways. They are trying to make believe they are actually fighting for the Crow, but they are not really doing much to protect it.

When you cut through all the verbiage in this amendment, you find that it does not really change anything in terms of existing legislation. I think, because my Conservative friends come from the Prairies and have put forth in a small way the arguments of the farmers, I will certainly will be voting for and in favour of Motion No. 58. I see you are being very polite, Mr. Speaker, and signalling that my time is up. Rather than make you stand up at this hour of the morning and call me to order, I will sit down.

Mr. Charles Mayer (Portage-Marquette): Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of things I want to say. First, I want to deal with a few of the interventions made by the NDP and to dismiss them as quickly as I can because this is an important amendment and I want to get to the parts of it that are most important. I am pleased to see the Minister is here. I hope, when I have finished speaking, the Minister will be aware of some of our concerns and why this amendment was moved by the Hon. Member for Kindersley-Lloydminster (Mr. McKnight).

When the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) called this amendment fluff, I would like to point out to the House that he managed to attend parts of one afternoon Committee meeting in Vancouver and he made three interventions. The Chairman ruled on one of them that the question put did not have to be answered because it was really a political question. If anyone was fluff in terms of his participation respecting this Bill when it was in committee, it was certainly the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway. Anything he may say may be dismissed as fluff, based on the kind of performance he showed in committee.

With regard to what we just heard from the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom), when he said that we want to have it both ways, I would like to ask him or his Party to explain why, on the one hand, they say they are in favour of keeping the Crow and, on the other hand, move an amendment that, in effect, has the purpose of dismissing the Crow. As soon as the NDP agree to a safety net above the level of the Crow, to my mind at least it means the NDP has changed its tune or

position. Members of the NDP are the ones who are trying to have it both ways.

That is enough about the NDP except to say, when they stand up and bemoan not having a Liberal Government or a Tory Government that will ever do anything on behalf of the railways, and when we see their performance here tonight and how sad it is, we can understand why the NDP will never be in a position to form a government. If the performance of the Members of the NDP is any indication of what would happen if the NDP were in government, we have to be thankful that the prospect of the NDP forming a government is very, very remote, and slim indeed. That is something we have to be thankful for during this late evening.

Let me speak about the motion. I think the Minister will agree with me that a preferable way to proceed with this Bill would have been to make some of the money available to producers so they could put some efficiency into the system themselves. But that is not the case. Given that fact, and because we deal with a regulated industry—any of us who sat in the committee this summer could not help but realize what a regulated and totally controlled industry it is—surely it becomes incumbent upon the Government to see to it to the best of its ability that the railways that are regulated to perform, do the kinds of things this Bill intends and instructs them to do. That is what this amendment does.

In many respects the railways should not be able to have it both ways. They should not be able to live freely in a regulated society. They should not be able to get money without expecting to have some regulations by which they have to live. In fact, that is what Motion 58 does. The NDP can talk all it wants about its similarity to Section 262 of the Railway Act. There are a lot of similarities, except that what this motion does is to collect parts of the Railway Act and the National Transportation Act that are applicable to grain, and translate them into language that is specifically applicable to grain. I would argue in this respect it should be more effective than Section 262 of the Railway Act. When we have a regulated industry, of which the railways are a part and the Government is a part, surely the railways should expect some regulations to be put in place to see they perform.

Second, when we do have so many regulations, and all the money is going to the railways, I would also suggest that it is incumbent upon us to see that the amount of money that is going to the railways is as lean as possible. What you are going to have is inflationary costs borne by the Government and the producers. That inflationary increase will be based on the initial amount of money with which we start. In many ways that was the fault of the Gilson process.

The people at the Gilson meetings, to my mind, were more concerned than they should have been about some of the things that came about after the agreement. There was not enough concern about the producers initially, and about the Government's share of the money. Everybody was concerned about getting a piece of the pie. The bigger amount of money they could pile on the table and which the Government was going to commit—and we have to give the Government credit