

*Western Grain Transportation Act*

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville):** Mr. Speaker, as other Members have pointed out previously in this debate, we are now dealing with a form of closure. It is a rare form of closure that has not been used in this House since 1955 and was last used in Westminster in 1943, but—

**Mr. Smith:** It is not closure. The last time it was used in this House—

**Mr. Mazankowski:**—not by a Minister and not to slam the door shut on debate on a very contentious and important issue. As my colleague for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) pointed out, this form of closure is being imposed—

**Mr. Smith:** It is not closure.

**Mr. Mazankowski:**—by a dying, lame duck Government. It is being imposed upon a region of Canada where the Government does not have more than two Members representing that region. It has struck out in western Canada so western Canadians are really paying the price.

The reason it is moving closure—

**Mr. Smith:** It is not closure.

**Mr. Mazankowski:**—is that the Government knows that this is a divisive measure and that it has created a lot of anxiety. They know that it is a piece of legislation that goes to the very fabric, heart and core of western Canada's social and economic structure.

There are many things that are bad about this Bill. There are many things that are disastrous about this Bill. To use closure—

**Mr. Smith:** It is not closure. Stop misleading.

**Mr. Mazankowski:**—is an affront to western Canada, an affront to western Canadian Members of Parliament and it is an affront to this institution.

**Mr. Smith:** It is not closure.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Could I have order, Mr. Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order. Some Members take heckling lightly and do not mind it. The Hon. Member who was given the floor should not be interrupted. It is his right and privilege to be heard.

**Mr. Blais:** Tell the truth.

**Mr. Smith:** You cannot mislead the House.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Mr. Speaker, I am not misleading the House. The facts are very clear. The fact of the matter is that this Government has used a form of closure more than 20 times in this session. This nation of Canada has had some bitter experiences with closure. We have seen the National Energy Program which destroyed the western Canadian energy industry, particularly the supply, service and exploration industry. It is a policy that has more than doubled energy

prices. I should say as well that the Government had the support of my friends to the left, the NDP.

The Government did the same thing with the Constitution which really set out to colonize the western Canadian Provinces. Again it had the support of my friends to the left, the NDP. They have set out to collectivize agriculture in this country through a Crown corporation known as Canagrex. The Government used closure and again had the support of my friends to the left. They want all the policies of agriculture formulated from on high, from the ivory towers in Ottawa. That is what they want.

We now have a situation where the Government of Canada is imposing closure—

**Mr. Smith:** It is not closure. You are misleading.

**Mr. Mazankowski:**—on the dismantling of the statutory Crowsnest Pass rates which could destroy the social and economic fabric of the West and cripple further a floundering Canadian economy. This Government has had the support of the arm chair critics over there. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, what this debate is doing? It is really separating the farmers from the armchair critics to my left. That is all they are, armchair theorists. They like to see agriculture collectivized so that it could all be under the control of a central planning bureaucracy sitting here in Ottawa.

I am disappointed with the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) and his lack of response. He has a chance to enter into the debate again on this particular motion. I challenge him to rise in his place. We in this Party have documented some very major objections to the piece of legislation before us, Bill C-155. We have documented at least a dozen points.

There are four or five points which I want to reiterate. First, the 10 per cent safety net that the Minister has advanced in the form of an amendment is not satisfactory. It will continue to create a situation where the statutory freight rate for the farmer will double by 1985-86 and multiply five times by the year 1990. The fact of the matter is that the historical figure is something in the order of 7 per cent or 8 per cent.

If we look over the last ten years, between the years 1970 to 1974 the farmers were paying 5.3 per cent of their income from grain for freight; from 1975 to 1979, it was 3.8 per cent; and from 1982 it was roughly 3 per cent. When one looks at it over the last ten years, farmers have been paying a freight rate equal to about 4 per cent of their weighted average of grain. This Minister has put forward a safety net of 10 per cent. That is not historical. It is far from historical and he must bend that figure or this Bill will not get passed, I can assure him of that.

The second point of contention is the 31.1 million tonne cap. That is not satisfactory. It is a disincentive. If we recognize the importance of grain to our national economy and the importance of encouraging production and marketing, then there should be an incentive to produce more. The result of putting on this 31.1 million tonne cap is tantamount to stepping on the accelerator and using the brake at the same time. It does not work.