

eggs, whose kids go out and pick the carrots. They are not rich but they have a desire to work and to do things for the country. They want to make their own way but the NDP want to deny them the right to earn their own living by selling their wheat. They say the wheat has to go by train.

An Hon. Member: No.

Mr. Taylor: The man from the Island says "No". He says there is never a time when you can use a truck in the best interests of the producer. Such nonsense. Truckers contribute to the economy of the country just as much as the railways do. Truckers are able to step in and fill the gap when the railways cannot deliver.

I can go along with the arguments the NDP make about abandonment of lines, but there is nothing in this subclause about that. I have gone through abandonment. I have sat in homes and have seen the farmer and his wife cry because the line was being abandoned. I have gone to the Board of Transport Commissioners and pleaded with them to leave the railway lines, so I know what I am talking about. This clause has nothing to do with abandonment. Its purpose is to get the grain to market so that the producer can put the money in his pocket.

The NDP talk about trucks ruining the highways, but I wonder if they know what they are talking about. The hopper trailers used by trucks today carry 110,000 pounds or about 900 to 1,000 bushels. They have sufficient axles that the actual toll on the road is less than that of a small truck with one axle and a small tire.

Highway construction is not immature in this country; it is mature. Highways are built for the type of axle that is used on them. A proper subgrade is built and a proper base course, so the only thing that wears out after years and years is the surface and that is a very small part of the costs. The surface can be renewed and the axle load can be regulated. The Member from B.C. who knows so much about trucking should put that in his hat. Highways will not be ruined. A lot of this happens in wintertime when the highways are frozen, but even the inadequate roads constructed by some municipalities because they do not have sufficient money are able to carry heavy loads. They are gravel and they are frozen. Every road in Alberta in winter is hard surfaced, not with asphalt. Jack Frost does the job for them. Those roads carry the traffic.

● (1210)

When one talks about wearing out roads, what better way to wear out roads, if they have to wear out, than by hauling the grain of the producer so we can put some money into the pocket of the producer? Every one of those five speakers of the NDP was completely haywire. They are talking about the wrong clause altogether. We are talking about the interests of the producers and the economy of this country.

Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, it is always a privilege to speak in this Chamber and to follow the Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor). He has had a long and

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very creditable career in politics in Canada. Much of what he said in the last ten minutes reflects his enormous amount of experience after 30 years as a Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: In the Province of Alberta he was the Minister of Highways and the good people of his area, and throughout the whole Province, I might add, always referred to having "Taylor-made" roads in that Province.

It is with that wisdom, I am sure, that he tells us something very important which relates to this amendment, and that is that the fundamental issue which we are talking about is the question of efficiency. The New Democratic Party has used the word "efficiency" and I intend to use it also. The NDP believes it is efficient to keep a railway system because it wants to keep the railway system. I submit, Sir, that efficiency is not desire. It is the bottom line as measured in dollars and cents.

I would like to use an example which I believe even the NDP can understand. In a nearby constituency there is a branch line which serves one community. In that community they use four trains a year to remove the grain. Calculating a train at 100 cars, it would mean that train would have to make some 66 trips on the average of 4.5 cars per stock lot. An engine, Sir, is around 80 tonnes. In addition to the engine there is the caboose, plus the cars, plus a whole network for fixing up the railway bed. In virtually everyone's judgment, that rail line is not likely to stay in service ad infinitum. What is the answer of the NDP? When the line is abandoned there will be no service for the farmers, although the NDP claims it is looking after the farmers. The reality is that trucks are more efficient in some instances. In the majority of other instances, the train is more efficient.

Surely it is not difficult to comprehend that to have a rail line which moves only grain, which has sometimes as many as four 80-tonne engines, would be a cheaper way of moving grain. The actual data indicate that a train can move grain at one-fifth the cost and one-twentieth the pollution. However, surely on the short hauls in some directions, to have a whole network which services the train, its engine, its caboose and all of its line people, may not be as efficient and trucks may be more viable.

That is the data I have and I submit, Sir, that when those situations come into play, obviously the farmer ought not to be the one denied the service, but rather Government should opt for different modes of transportation. There is a \$651 million subsidy, not for transportation but for the railways, and under what philosophical judgment should the railways receive that support from the Government at the expense of any other mode of transportation?

If it could be clearly demonstrated that many persons with little baskets could carry the grain to Vancouver, the Port of Churchill, or the Port at Thunder Bay, cheaper and more efficiently and our economy could be enriched, then all those social arguments which the Hon. member for Bow River said were for naught would in fact come into play in the argument