

supported all of the essential points that we are trying to make in the debate on this side of the House. That is why the ability to debate and to have the time to debate the principle of the Bill is so important. We are shocked by the ten-minute speeches, the limitation and the closure techniques being imposed on us.

The people of Canada, let alone Members of the Government, do not understand the principle of the Bill. That principle is the method by which the subsidy is to be paid. If it is paid to the railroads, then secondary industry is locked out of western Canada forever. All we are saying is that we should study the Gilson and the Hall formulae—particularly the Gilson formulae—and that we should go that route where we have the freedom of choice to allow part or all of the payment to go to the producers.

We are not just producing grains for export but, rather, we are entering the whole world of research and development and variation in grain production so that we can start to build processing plants and hog feeding plants. I could stand here for 20 minutes, Mr. Speaker, to tell you about one of the most exciting operations I have ever been involved in in my life that could start up in western Canada should the method of payment be to the producer of the grain. That is the issue.

Mr. Bruce Howe has led the lobby on B.C. Members and he thinks he is going to ruin us politically because we are supporting what he refers to as “those guys from the Prairies”. In January, 1982 the Minister was out pedalling the Bill before he changed it 180 degrees from what he knew was right. Let me tell you that Mr. Bruce Howe was supporting entirely the position of the B.C. Members on this Bill. In a speech which he gave in January, 1982 he said:

● (1710)

CP Rail estimates that grain accounts for 20 per cent of its workload but yields, at best, only 8 per cent of its revenue.

We agree that the railroads need more money. We are not saying they do not. He goes on:

Representatives from more than 50 different organizations covering every segment of the western economy—including nearly all the agricultural associations—joined together in an urgent request to Ottawa for “commercially justifiable compensation to the railways for the shipment of farm commodities currently moving at statutory rate levels”.

We agree. Mr. Howe was right on when he gave his speech on the Crow rate.

—there will be a very strong temptation for the Government to side-step the issue by making direct cash grants to the railroads—

This is Mr. Howe speaking in January, 1982.

—for double tracking or building tunnels—to enable them to overcome their bottlenecks. This is the so-called ‘project’ approach to the problem.

I think it should be called the ‘bandaid’ approach. Because—while cash grants would certainly enable the railroads to start on major improvements—the problem of the Crow rate would merely be deferred. The railroads would continue to lose money handling grain;—

Mr. Howe, Mr. Speaker, said further in January, 1982:

A comprehensive solution would recognize—first and foremost—that grain as a commodity must pay its way. . . . recognize the need for statutory assurances to the grain growers; both for rail service, and for some form of compensation.

Western Grain Transportation Act

—I wholeheartedly endorse the need for such statutory assurances. The whole prairie economy has been built for 50 years on the premise of a statutory régime for grain shipment.

A fully compensatory rate to the railroads for moving grain would mean a four or fivefold increase in railroad rates.

Mr. Howe speaks against that. He said that would be a disgraceful injustice to the prairie farmers. Yet today he comes here and lobbies me, and other Hon. Members from British Columbia, against exactly what this Bill is doing. He says to pass this Bill even if it is imperfect. Yet in January, 1982 he was speaking out against everything this Bill does to western Canada and to the farmers in western Canada. Further on in his speech he said:

—the comprehensive solution has found a champion in Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin.

That is the way the Minister of Transport was before he tabled Bill C-155, Mr. Speaker, until the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) shook him by the ears and said it was not political. Then the Quebec caucus got hold of him and said: “You cannot do that; that is going to threaten our hog production”. The Government of Canada knows, however, that it is not going to threaten the hog production of Quebec. It knows very well that the feed grain formula is corn and soybean and hog production would not be threatened.

Why should the Government shut off and smother the chance to have a secondary industry, a meat packing industry, a meat slaughter industry, a hog growing industry in western Canada? Most of our market goes out across the Pacific, Mr. Speaker, and south of the 49th parallel. In no way, shape or form are we doing any harm in asking for some decent consideration on this Bill. I feel it is despicable that the Government should treat us the way it is in forcing closure and ten-minute speeches when Hon. Members are still crying out, trying to represent their region in this great country.

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu’Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, this so-called second reading debate on the Crow Bill is the action of a lame duck Government. A “lame duck Government” is an American expression. When a new President in the US. is elected in November, he does not actually take power until the next March. In the interim period governments who have the power technically should carry out the wishes of the new régime. This lame duck Government is frozen with fear, paralysed with panic, too fat to fight and too frightened to run. This deliberate closing down of our right to make speeches on a subject which affects the whole constitutional basis of our country is the action of a Government which is paralysed with panic and too frightened to fight.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, belongs in Parliament. It does not belong in any Snavely Report. It does not belong in any consensus efforts by an economist. Under the law of this land the Crow rate is only debatable in this Parliament. However, Parliament cannot debate the Crow rate, although it knows what it is talking about. The Crow rate demands that we maintain the principle of the National Transportation Act, that we know the cost it demands, that the National Transportation Act machinery be used, and that we use the Canadian