

Transportation

suggests there are a number of differences. If there are a number of differences, Canada Steamship Lines must have been receiving payments in the past to which it was not entitled or there has been some error somewhere.

When this clause comes before the committee again I will move that the word "transportation" be substituted for the word "railway" in line 28 on page 63 of the bill. I shall do this because the clause pertains to order No. 96300 and that order is specifically concerned with the Freight Rates Reduction Act. It is stated in that act that "company" means a transportation company. There is a difference between a transportation company and a railway company. Having said that, and I shall probably say more when the amendment is before us, I shall send a copy of the amendment to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the minister. I should now like to deal briefly with the bill in general.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether before the hon. gentleman does that he would permit me to make a very brief observation about his proposed amendment. I would have some difficulty in accepting it in the form it is. But in view of the statement I made to which the hon. gentleman referred—I forget which clause we were dealing with at the time but it does not matter; it was some time ago—about putting an item in the estimates, I will see whether between now and the time we reach clause 74 again I can find some form of words that would perhaps indicate that an appropriate sum, because I think the rules would have to be slightly different in this cause on account of certain other payments that were made to the railways for other reasons, should be made available to Canada Steamship Lines and any other transportation company covered in the order. Then this provision would be in the bill. I can see the great advantage of having it in the bill. It is a problem only of seeing whether we can find a form of words that will express the intent we both have and not do something that was unintended. The reason I rose to make this speech was not for the members of the committee so much as for certain persons who are not present but who in fact we all know are in the gallery.

Mr. MacEwan: The heavenly host.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): I appreciate the minister's remarks. I would like to say a word or two about the purpose of the bill. I know that

perhaps most hon. members think I have said enough about it already but there are one or two other things I should like to say. My remarks concern the over-all purpose of the bill and its effects. I shall not deal with the public utilities aspect other than to say that the bill denotes that competition shall be the keynote in transportation in the years ahead. Competition shall be the guide line which will in effect set rates, provide services and, we hope, put the railways in a better financial position. In a sense this is one of the big reasons for the bill. It arose from the report of the MacPherson commission which felt we had to do something to allow the railways to obtain more revenue.

However, I would point out that the bill puts no ceiling whatsoever on the railways. They can charge as much as the traffic will bear. This is where we will get into trouble. We see farm machinery companies all across Canada charging whatever the traffic will bear. The Minister of Agriculture made some brave statements some time ago. He said he would watch this situation and the farm machinery companies would have to account for any price increase. We have seen price increases on farm machinery but we have not seen any action by the minister.

It is perhaps a true interpretation of the minister to say that he says a lot and does very little. This takes me back to his tour of western Canada shortly after he became Minister of Agriculture. He went there to test western reaction with regard to an eastern lawyer being made Minister of Agriculture. I remember the brave statements with regard to transportation that he made in Winnipeg. I wish we had had his help in the last couple of weeks on the subject we have been debating. He has been noticeable by his absence. He was reported as having said:

The C.P.R. is chafing more and more under statutory freight rates that it maintains are unrealistically low in modern days. Mr. Greene displayed a good grasp of Canadian history and economics in publicly stating that the C.P.R. was given rich rewards in return for the guaranteed freight rates.

It is too bad he could not have said that in the house where it would really count. He also said at about the same time on the same tour, as reported in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* of January 13, 1966:

There was one slight departure from the latter when he—