

Restraint of Government Expenditures

alternative suppliers. Those of us who have negotiated with ExportKleb over the years judge this situation as serious and that our further business with them is definitely in jeopardy.

Eliminating the subsidy and the "hold down" will visit disaster upon Canadian millers and damage a substantial export market for Canadian wheat in the form of flour. We cannot believe that these and other foreseeable consequences are in the public interest.

We cannot understand how this change can be of any benefit to Canada other than by achieving a short term but ultimately illusory reduction in government expenditures.

In an attempt to examine the impact of this policy change we are enclosing a submission on the subject. We urge you to give this matter very close consideration.

In spite of the evidence that this places Canada's flour exports to the U.S.S.R., the Caribbean and a few other places in jeopardy, the Minister of Transport and this insensitive government who up until last night refused to listen, still insist on including repeal of section 272 of the Railway Act in this legislation. The least they could do is withdraw that clause. Their saving will be \$11 million, but if they examine the other side of the coin the cost will be many times that.

As I said at the outset, Mr. Speaker, a user-pay concept is not feasible in a country like ours. It is only feasible in a country with densely settled population, a compact geography and uniformity of distribution, but in a country with a large geography and a harsh climate, you cannot get away with it. It simply cannot, and does not, apply in a country like Canada. For us to be able to deliver our primary products and processed primary products in competition with the United States, Argentina, Australia or the European Economic Community, we must share the costs of transportation over the whole country. The "at and east" rates did that: maybe not as well as it should be done, but they made a contribution toward sharing the cost and putting Canada in a position to have a viable milling industry. I hope the hon. member for Assiniboia will sit down with Mr. Sarasen in Saskatoon—

Mr. Goodale: I have.

Mr. Benjamin: Well, he was not listening so I suggest the hon. member should go back and discuss it with him again, especially after what occurred yesterday. Maybe now the hon. member's hearing will be a little more sensitive. I have received correspondence from Mr. Sarasen and I think I understand him. I have had conversations with him. I agree with him. I do not agree with the hon. member for Assiniboia and the government.

● (1250)

The removal of the "at and east" rates, if you are talking in terms of restraint by the federal government, is sheer window-dressing at best, and outrageous discrimination at worst. I know the hon. member for Assiniboia and the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley (Mr. McIsaac) and other Tories are interested in helping the inland terminals. They have visions of unit trains loading up at the Cargill terminal or at Rosetown and all 100 cars of each train rushing through almost non-stop

[Mr. Benjamin.]

to Halifax. They have that vision. They want the grain to be hauled at a compensatory rate for which grain producers will pay. It will be done at the expense of the milling industry. But, of course, Mr. Speaker, according to the Liberals and Tories that is free enterprise. They believe in that nonsense. They have been governing this country for about 110 years and the disparities and discrimination in Atlantic Canada and the Prairie provinces continue. It does not matter which one of those two parties is in power.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): It seems as if they have governed this country for 1,000 years, not 110.

Mr. Benjamin: It has made no difference at all. The hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain spoke in glowing terms of what he and the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) tried to do when they were in government in the 1960s. Mr. Speaker, they had the golden opportunity of the century to change all these things, and they blew it. Their government fell apart and they ran around stabbing one another in the back. The boys who are really running the Tory party in central Canada got their own way again. The same thing is happening today.

Mr. Paproski: Where?

Mr. Benjamin: It is happening right now.

Mr. Paproski: Name one example.

Mr. Benjamin: I will tell my hon. friend, if he wants to know. When the Tory minister of agriculture in Alberta says that rapeseed products should not be under the Crowsnest Pass rates, that is an example occurring right now. When the Tory transport critic in the House of Commons says that we should have only one transcontinental passenger train, that is an example occurring right now. When the Tories say that feed grains should be on the open market, and they even write a letter to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) endorsing the policy of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang), that is an example occurring right now.

Mr. Mazankowski: Come off it.

Mr. Benjamin: When the Tories believe that family allowances should come under the means test, that is an example happening right now. I don't want to hear any more nonsense from the Tories, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Paproski: Hogwash!

Mr. Benjamin: We have a list of Tory proposals as long as your arm, Mr. Speaker. They are even worse than the Liberals, if you can believe it, and that's saying something. It means that they are really working at it.

Mr. Towers: Oh, boy, you people are really scared of the Tories.