

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Doug Lewis (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Shall all notices of motions be allowed to stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

MOTOR VEHICLE TRANSPORT ACT, 1986

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed from Tuesday, February 10, consideration of the motion of Mr. Crosbie that Bill C-19, an Act respecting motor vehicle transport by extra-provincial undertakings, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport; and the motion of Mr. Lewis (p. 3220).

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, I am quite delighted to rise and speak in this debate. The Bill that we are studying is Bill C-19, an Act respecting motor vehicle transport by extra-provincial undertakings. Significantly enough Bill C-19 will replace the Motor Vehicle Transport Act of 1953-54.

● (1530)

I spoke on Bill C-18 just one week ago. I thought that the Government would have learned from that debate that there are many things wrong with deregulation. During that debate many concerns were raised with respect to safety. Concerns were also raised with respect to corporate concentration and foreign investment. Instead of having learned its lesson the Government has decided to go right ahead and do the same thing in the trucking industry. I think that is highly regrettable.

This Bill will impact on all the people of Canada, not just the Conservative government ideology which is frozen in the mentality that private is best. I strongly urge the Government to rethink this particular piece of legislation. It has taken similar steps with respect to Teleglobe. It should look at issues that are good for Canada, issues which are not necessarily confined to the private sector.

This is a vital and key industry to Canada. I would like to give Hon. Members an example of just how vital the trucking industry is to our country and to our Gross National Product. It is a constantly growing industry. It generates over 70 per cent of total service revenue. The for-hire segment of the industry contributes over \$6 billion annually to our Gross

Motor Vehicle Transport Act, 1986

National Product. The industry pays salaries to over 90,000 men and women who work in the trucking industry. As the Parliamentary Secretary pointed out in his speech, which was so well prepared by the Ministry, there are between 200,000 and 250,000 people who are involved in spinoffs of this industry. As can be well seen, it is a big industry which touches the lives of many people.

I suggest that every Member of the House has constituents in his or her riding who are touched by every aspect of this Bill. Therefore it is essential that they stand up and speak about what concerns their constituents. Truckers in my riding have spoken to me with respect to this measure, just as people from the railways and airlines came to me to discuss their concerns. Their concerns need to be addressed. If we are to be fair and open spokesmen on their behalf, then we should bring their concerns to the attention of the House.

The meaningfulness of the industry is ignored as a result of the Government's motion which is now before us with respect to the question now being put. That would curtail the debate, something which I think is regressive and repressive. It is an unfortunate circumstance when we are faced with a motion which would muzzle the Members of this House who are supposed to have the right to intervene and speak up and be heard under the provisions of the new rules.

I suggest to Hon. Members that if they stay quiet with respect to this matter they will be counted on the negative side of the ledger. I remind Hon. Members that debating Bills in committee is not enough. In committees we deal with the nitty-gritty. But members of the Government have blocked ears with respect to proposals for amendments which members of the Opposition bring forward. They are nothing but a bunch of sheep who wag their tails and say yes to whatever the Minister wants. That is very sad, but that has been my experience when sitting in at committee hearings. I suggest that this House is the place where people who have concerns about the trucking industry should be expressing them.

Since 1984 regulations concerning the trucking industry have come under the jurisdiction of provincial Governments. There are different regulations in different provinces. There are different requirements with respect to entry for routes, for commodities and for safety precautions.

By way of example let us consider the problems with respect to safety. It is an area in which none of us wishes to compromise. It could be our children, our parents or ourselves who get hurt as a result of a lack of national safety standards. It is unfortunate that there is no clarity and no comprehensive legislation to cover the national safety code which we need. There is a definite and distinct connection between motor carrier deregulation and highway safety. I believe most Members of the House feel as I do, that there can be no compromise with respect to the issue of highway safety and that verbal commitments are just that, verbal commitments. They are not committed to law and they do not have the force of law.