

Mr. Nystrom: Are you supporting it?

Mr. McKnight: We do not know whether Members of the NDP will use their influence, and I really hope they do, because in all the areas in my riding where abandonment has taken place, the farmers have gone to the local elevator companies and asked, "Would you leave the elevator here?" The elevator companies all say, "Oh, no, we cannot leave our elevators here because there is not a rail line". The farmers ask, "Will you upgrade your elevator to handle a tandem truck and a semi?" They say, "No, we cannot because there is not a rail line". I hope that the NDP and Members in the western part of Canada will use their influence to persuade those elevator companies to leave their facilities where the lines are abandoned. It makes sense to have off-line elevators where there is not a railroad. We have discussed that in the House on several occasions.

The other day I heard the Hon. Member for The Battledowns-Meadow Lake (Mr. Anguish), and I believe he was speaking from experience, speak concerning areas in the northern part of his riding that could be served by a trucking amendment. We know that in the Peace River district a trucking amendment could be to the advantage of the people in those ridings. However, as we have often said in the House, what the producers in western Canada want most is to have their rail lines. The Government has made a commitment to upgrade those lines. We were shocked when, after we put forward our amendment, we heard the deputy minister say that his understanding was that there would be a trade-off between branch line rehabilitation money, which is not part of this Bill, and some form of trucking assistance. We had not anticipated that occurrence at all because the Government had made its commitment for branch line rehabilitation. In my riding where there is the Dodsland sub and the Matador sub, they will no longer be able to haul grain without the continued rehabilitation funds. The commitments made by the federal Government were accepted in good faith by the elevator companies as well as by the producers in those areas.

● (1740)

Therefore, when we consider the off-line elevator concept, I hope the New Democratic Party means that it will use its influence, as we would and the producers will, to maintain an elevator system where a line has been abandoned. If it does not do that, the whole amendment will fall through the slats. There will not be any advantage to the producers of grain in western Canada.

We have heard, and continue to hear, about the large trucking companies. I know of approximately six trucking companies in my area, such as Loppacher Turners, the Leys Brothers, Roberge, Kindersley Freighters and Biggar Transport. All of those firms have four or five trucks. There is also Smith Transport in my area—I do not want the NDP to get upset. It belongs to Hershel Smith in Sanctuary which is a town of 15 people where he has five employees. It is small businesses such as those which we are talking about when we deal with the trucking companies. We are not concerned about

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companies that have had the ability to generate over \$10 million in revenue in the last year, such as those four companies which Canadian Pacific took over in Saskatchewan. While I have not seen them hauling grain, I am not concerned about them because they have their licensing and their authorities. That is why Canadian Pacific purchased them, not to haul grain.

The people who will benefit from a trucking amendment will be primarily the producers and the small independent truckers who own from three to six rigs. Those truckers spend their money in the local community, buy their fuel from the local bulk dealers, buy their tires from the local garage and have their maintenance done locally. In addition, they provide a payroll in those small communities in western Canada which essentially do not have any other industry. When one considers the benefits coming from an employer who employs five people in small communities, and I mean small communities such as mine which has 25 people, one realize that he is probably more beneficial than the railroads are in Melville, Biggar in my constituency, or Wilkie. They spend their total income within those small communities.

I hope the next New Democratic Party speaker will be able to explain whether their amendment will provide for an off-line elevator system or whether the elevators will be removed as they have been in the past, because there is no railroad. That has happened on every line in my part of Canada that has been abandoned. I hope those Members will use their influence, as we have, to maintain the off-line elevator.

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, since Hon. Members may have forgotten, Motion No. 35 reads:

That Bill C-155 be amended in Clause 17 by striking out line 25 at page 8 and substituting the following therefor:

the grain producers, but such agreements shall not provide for the movement of grain by motor vehicle transport from shipping points on rail lines which have not been abandoned by order of the Canadian Transport Commission.

Mr. Beatty: Could we hear that again?

Miss Jewett: Seriously, I believe that Hon. Members have forgotten that the motion simply asks that the agreements shall not provide for the movement of grain by motor vehicle transport from shipping points on the rail lines which have not been abandoned, and I emphasize, on rail lines that have not been abandoned.

Another point I think I should reiterate is that the federal Government, under Transport Canada or the CTC, has not conducted any studies to ascertain the impact on highway and road costs, provincial and municipal budgets or total system costs.

While I do not know if Hon. Members have looked to comparable areas to see how problems have been dealt with there, I have studied the State of Iowa, which is an intensive grain growing area. That State underwent a transfer of grain movement from railway to road into inland terminals similar to the proposal in Bill C-155. It was discovered that the