

BORROWING AUTHORITY ACT 1985-86 (No. 2)

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration in Committee of Bill C-51, an Act to provide borrowing authority—Miss MacDonald (for the Minister of State (Finance))—Mr. Charest in the Chair.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Clause 2 carry?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

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WESTERN GRAIN TRANSPORTATION ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-44, an Act to amend the Western Grain Transportation Act, as reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Transport.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport) moved:

That Bill C-44, an Act to amend the Western Grain Transportation Act, be amended in sub-clause 1(1)

(a) by striking out line 7 at page 1 and substituting the following:

"(D) nine Members who shall be";

(b) by striking out line 16 at page 1 and substituting the following:

"Manitoba four representing the pro-".

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I thought that was my amendment, not the amendment of the Minister of Transport. I filed it earlier this day.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): With respect to the point of order of the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin), he has brought a similar motion before the House, but to be able to present the motion he would need Royal recommendation. In this case he does not have it. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) does have Royal recommendation.

Mr. Benjamin: We went through this yesterday in the Transport Committee. It makes no difference in terms of the Royal recommendation whether an amendment is moved by the Minister or by an Hon. Member of the Opposition. The point is that this amendment, whether moved by the Minister or myself—and I submit that my amendment was in first, but that does not matter—the Royal recommendation covers a lump sum of money which he is allowed to spend under the provisions of Bill C-44. The Bill in no way specifies how much will be paid to each member of the advisory committee. If the Minister or myself increase the number of members on the

Western Grain Transportation Act

committee, with the consent of this House, and if it was originally conceived that the per diem was \$100 a day, given the amount of money available to the Minister under the Royal recommendation, and the number is increased from eight to nine, that may mean the Minister pays the members only \$90 a day in order to pay that one additional member. There is nothing in the legislation which specifies how much is going to be paid to the members of that committee. I submit that the Royal recommendation does not enter into this because the Bill itself does not spell out what shall be paid to individual members on a per diem, or any other basis. It only spells out the amount which the Minister has available.

● (2110)

I submit that it makes no difference whether the Minister or I present the amendment. That has nothing to do with the Royal recommendation presently before the House. If it does, the Minister and the Government House Leader will have to come back and ask for unanimous consent to have the Royal recommendation changed. Either that or my amendment or that of the Minister is acceptable now. You cannot have it both ways. My amendment, or a similar amendment proposed by the Minister, does not mean any extra expenditure by the Government under the present Royal recommendation. We do not need to go through that nonsense again.

By the way, you should know that this has been the result of much consultation and meetings in the committee and other places, and there need not to be any more nit-picking about Royal recommendations because the Minister has the authority to pay 8, 9, 10, 12 or 100 members with the amount of money already in the Royal recommendation.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to prolong this debate, nor do I want to deny the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin) the credit for initiating the amendment you are now dealing with. It clearly is his amendment. There is no question about that. The advice we received both from the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Hnatyshyn) and my legal advisers was that this did require a change in the Royal recommendation. I know the Hon. Member is making an argument tonight similar to what he made in committee. To in effect do what he is suggesting would mean that all members of the Senior Grain Transportation Committee who are presently members would receive a lower per diem allowance as the result of the addition of another member to represent the Province of Saskatchewan.

The fact that we have a change in the Royal recommendation now gives the Minister the prerogative of adding additional funds to pay for the person who is going to be added to the Senior Grain Transportation Committee. It was in the spirit of ensuring that the amendment would be incorporated in the legislation that we took this extra precaution.

I in no way want to assume credit or authorship for this amendment. I will simply give the Hon. Member for Regina West full credit and full marks for bringing the amendment forward and making a strong case. We agreed. We discussed it at some length and I certainly wanted to incorporate the