

throughout. They have, unlike the Conservative Party, the branch plant of American Ronald Reaganism, been consistent.

Motion No. 50 puts some backbone in Clause 29 which deals with railway capital investment and Government monitoring of this investment in return for the subsidies which the railways will receive under this Bill. Specifically, we ask for guarantees of investment linked to Government payments to railways as outlined in Section 55. Section 55 gives the Government the power for holdbacks if the railways do not meet commitments for track maintenance on branch lines and investment in grain handling equipment. Our Motion No. 50 spells out the amount that can be reasonably expected in railway investment.

Why is this necessary? Because of the past and present railway statement of intention and investment. It is important that the country realize that railway statements of intention to invest are made on a yearly basis. The companies have made no statements committing themselves to the railway megaprojects that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) continually speaks of in this House. Second, there is a history of public aid to railways that Bill C-155 perpetuates. Money flows to the railways. The return to the public is always in the forms of regulations and guarantees of service and nothing happens with these guarantees and regulations. Bill C-155 does nothing to improve this.

Motion No. 50 sets identifiable levels rather than nebulous ones. It does not guarantee the public equity in the CPR that we would really like. At least it makes the company put its money substantially into grain-related items rather than non-transport, non-Canadian items which CPR has helped itself to in recent years, such as buying railroads in the United States.

● (1910)

That is what we are trying to do in Motion No. 50. Those of us who come from Vancouver—after all, the CPR got half of Vancouver as a result of the famous settlement to build the transcontinental railways—know that you have to keep close tabs on what they do with the public grants that they receive. The CPR has been the biggest corporate welfare bum in the history of Canada. Motion No. 53 deletes the provision of confidentiality. It is the same as Conservative Motion No. 52. I agree with what the Member for Wetaskiwin said on this.

Let me conclude with these two remarks. First, Motion No. 50 makes sense. It is a practical motion and a good motion. It requires the railways to put their investments where their mouth is. Finally, I take great umbrage at what the Conservatives have suggested to be the way the NDP has operated in this House. I have tried to make a speech in which I make a rational amendment and explain it in a practical way. I think that that is what we have been doing.

I was at the Committee hearings in Vancouver. I could not go all across the country but I was in Vancouver and I saw the hearings. The NDP have been perfectly consistent. What you are seeing tonight is the Conservative Party trying to save their derrieres because they have been caught in the squeeze of offering an amendment to postpone the Crow changes for

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three years. Either you are for the Crow changes or you are against the Crow changes. We are against the changes in the Crow because we are afraid that it will bring a tremendous cultural change and destroy the present prairie farm life. I can understand that cry from prairie farmers, even though I am from Vancouver. That is why I have supported my colleagues here tonight in this motion and in their general, consistent stand against changes in the Crow rate.

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski), the Hon. Member for Kindersley-Lloydminster (Mr. McKnight), the Hon. Member for Portage-Marquette (Mr. Mayer), and the Hon. Member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Neil), have worked tirelessly and consistently on this Bill.

Tonight is a revealing evening. As we are coming closer to the end of this debate, it is the NDP who have made the greatest flip-flop in this House since Jack Horner joined the Liberals. Mr. Speaker, they and the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) say that this motion makes political sense, it makes economic sense, and it is consistent with the position the NDP have taken. Those are his words.

What does the motion say? It is as badly constructed as other motions by the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin). I do not consider the Hon. Member for Regina West necessarily wanted to do this, but it again shows his lack of attention to detail. The NDP have been saying consistently that you cannot kill the Crow. They have been saying consistently no change. Today we have a motion which does just that. The NDP has moved an amendment which would kill the Crow, which would alter the Crow. They do not know what they are doing.

An Hon. Member: Get a lawyer or learn to read.

Mr. Epp: The Hon. Member says get a lawyer. I think he is a farmer and I would think he also knows what the average price is that farmers are paying for the Crow.

Mr. Benjamin: He got a lawyer, you didn't.

Mr. Epp: His amendment deals with the shipper share limitation adjustment, which in layman's language means what the average price paid for the commodity moved will be. Right now the average is 2½ per cent. What are they asking for? Three per cent.

Mr. Speaker, today they are asking for a 20 per cent increase to farmers to pay for the movement of grain.

An Hon. Member: That is all the Government wanted in January.

Mr. Epp: They are as bad as the Government.

Some Hon. Members: They are part of the Government.

Mr. Epp: I know some people would say that is impossible. I thought so too until tonight.