

*Transportation*

assured that there had been extensive consultation. I had not seen any press reports to this effect nor had any special meetings been called, and I would presume therefore that these consultations were by letter, telephone calls or some other process that did not come to the attention of the press and the mass news media of the nation.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the hon. member, is it not true that agencies of the provincial governments as well as of interested bodies made representations to the parliamentary committee on Bill No. C-120, the bill preceding this one?

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Quite definitely. Back in 1964 when Bill No. C-120 was before the house there was consultation, and as a result of the criticisms that came forward, from the provincial governments largely, and also economic groups such as the pool associations of western Canada, the bill was not proceeded with. I am pointing out the emphasis that is placed on national policy and I shall come to the other point I wish to mention in a moment, namely that there is a new feature of the bill. This new feature of the super board is an entirely new concept. It was not contained in Bill No. C-120 nor was it one of the recommendations of the MacPherson report. In addition, I am led to believe that there has been no preliminary consultation with provincial governments or any other major economic groups in the country on this point. My reason for saying this, as the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Churchill) has pointed out, is that the approach of the government in bringing the bill before the house has been that of enacting instant legislation.

● (9:40 p.m.)

We had a transportation crisis on our hands, we had to grapple with the emergency bill, and this present bill before the house has been presented as an integral part of the total solution. Because of the unseemly haste in the matter there has not even been the opportunity to get a response from the press and certainly from the general public, but I have received some telegrams and have seen a few editorial comments from the west which indicate that they are somewhat distressed by the fact that we are proceeding to establish an act without preliminary consultation. To the western way of thinking this bill overemphasizes the national policy aspect, and in particular moves forward in the direction of a bureaucratic body which will tend to aggravate and accentuate the national

approach, rather than to give adequate consideration to the necessary regional approach which must be made if we are to deal satisfactorily with any of the major economic problems of Canada.

Manitoba has always taken a keen interest in the formulation of a transportation policy. The Manitoba government has been a leader in encouraging the concept of regional development both within the provinces and across Canada as a whole. It is because of the encouragement that was given to the province of Manitoba under the leadership of her present government that certain significant developments which I think I should bring to the attention of the minister have occurred within the past few months. I admit quite freely that these developments also have been encouraged and assisted by the area development program put forward by the present Liberal administration.

For example, it was only in August that the southwestern part of the province of Manitoba established what is known—and I think it is a unique economic organization—as the Westman Development Corporation. It is largely based on a group of local municipalities, both rural and urban which, encouraged by the efforts of the government of Manitoba and the government of Canada, have seized the initiative in establishing the co-operative co-ordinated approach of dealing with the problems of economic underdevelopment in western Manitoba.

It is this group which has expressed to me some concern about the national emphasis in the legislation and has pointed out that the spirit of the legislation seems to be at odds with the encouraging trend which has prevailed in Canada in recent years toward decentralization and diversification.

In my own city of Brandon, if I may speak on a strictly local basis, we have recently been featured in magazines, such as the *Weekend Magazine*, as a community which has demonstrated amazing progress, notwithstanding the limitations and handicaps of an isolated geographic position. I have not the date before me, but most hon. members will have read Peter Gzowski's feature article under the title of "Brandon in Mink" which is merely a euphemistic way of expressing the fact that a new wave of prosperity has hit this community as a result of the encouraging trend toward decentralization and diversification. This has been done, notwithstanding the fact that there is a considerable disability at all