

**An hon. Member:** Four years too late.

**Hon. E. D. Fulton (Kamloops):** Mr. Speaker, I have a feeling of great unease as to what we are now asked to do by the suggestion of the Minister of Transport. As I understand it, we all want to see the bill and the government is prepared to facilitate that by having it circulated. I suggest that consent should be confined to having the bill circulated for the information of hon. members. I say this because I have very grave reservations that we cannot, without violating the constitution, proceed with the bill as has been suggested by the minister because under the constitution there is a provision to the effect that there must be a resolution before we can proceed with a bill of this sort.

If we were just waiving a rule of the house, that would be different but we would be disregarding a constitutional provision. Therefore I think it would be much simpler, with less danger of creating such a far reaching precedent, if we simply consented to circulating the bill so that we can see it, to which the leaders of all parties have consented.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Speaker, I fear that the house is going to put itself, or the government, into a very awkward position by following the suggestion of the hon. member for Kamloops. A resolution, as he well knows, asks the house to decide whether it is expedient to introduce a bill. It has always been the practice that the expediency is based exclusively on the financial conditions of the bill. Unless there were some understanding that we were not to debate the bill on the resolution stage but on second reading, matters would be complicated still further.

I think the suggestion I have made meets the wishes of all hon. members. It is that we formally accept the resolution. I have a very lengthy description of the bill which I do not think I would be permitted to read at the first reading stage but which I had intended to use in committee on the resolution if the committee stage had been held. I would be quite happy, without reading it, to have it circulated with the bill to all hon. members.

● (4:00 p.m.)

The bill itself, I might say, is 68 pages long. It contains nearly 100 clauses, and it is very difficult to get through quickly without a guide of some sort. My suggestion is that we be permitted to deal with the resolution stage and get first reading of the bill. It seems to me that this would in no way abridge any

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opportunities for debate. Since it seems to be the universal view that it is expedient to have this legislation introduced—maybe it will not be considered expedient to pass it but at any rate we agree it should be introduced—I would be glad to have this mimeographed document, which I assure hon. members is simply a description of the bill in layman's language, distributed with the bill itself. This would help all hon. members to comprehend it. There are plenty of copies of the bill and of this document available, and if we could pass the resolution and then be given leave to introduce the measure I would be glad to make them available at once.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Has the Minister of Transport unanimous consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport)** moved that the house go into committee to consider the following resolution, which has been recommended to the house by His Excellency:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to define a national transportation policy for Canada suited to modern transportation requirements and to establish a national transportation authority to effect the objectives of the national transportation policy; to provide for new methods of fixing freight rates and for the rationalization of branch lines of railway and passenger train services; to authorize the payment from the Consolidated Revenue Fund by way of assistance to permit of orderly adjustment to the new freight rate of structures and the removal of other forms of assistance to railways; to authorize the payment of assistance from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to railway companies where they are required to maintain uneconomic branch lines or passenger train services in operation for the public good; to authorize payments to maintain the prevailing level of At and East freight rates on grain; to permit certain grants to be made from the Railway Grade Crossing Fund for a further period of three years beyond January 31, 1967; to authorize agreements relating to the carriage by rail of Her Majesty's mail and members of the Canadian Forces and police travelling on Her Majesty's service; to provide for the administration of commodity pipe lines, extra-provincial motor vehicle transport and water transport within the context of the national transportation policy, and to provide further for other matters consequential upon or related or incidental to any of the foregoing.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Batten in the chair.

**Mr. Douglas:** Mr. Chairman, I wish to make it perfectly clear that in agreeing to the passing of this resolution we are doing so solely for the purpose of seeing the bill and having the opportunity to discuss it. Our