

Theologians have spent hundreds of years debating Genesis, and I suppose it is only proper that members of the Senate should spend some time in debating the various merits and interpretations of this bill.

The bill itself is described as one which establishes a transportation policy for Canada. In reading the bill and the evidence given in committee, I find that really the bill does not establish a policy; it merely moves the transportation problems out of the office of the Minister of Transport and out of Cabinet responsibility into the hands of a group of bureaucrats.

The bill naturally concerns some sections of Canada a great deal more than others. For instance, I do not believe the people of Hamilton or of the Toronto area are greatly concerned or excited about this bill, yet it is of tremendous importance to the people of the Maritimes and of western Canada.

In reading the proceedings of the Transport and Communications Committee of the House of Commons, I notice that the Minister of Transport attempted to reduce the bill to a very simple level. He is reported as saying:

What I am saying is, either we make up our minds that we are serious about giving the railways a chance to earn their keep and not be a drag on the taxpayers, or we are not. This is the basic position.

Honourable senators, I am afraid I cannot reduce this bill to that simple level. In a country as vast as Canada we are naturally going to have transportation problems, and I find nothing sinful in the fact that various areas of Canada, because of their geographical position, are going to require federal assistance for transportation—call them subsidies if you wish.

The minister emphasized that we have to end this subsidy of \$110 million per year, yet when the House of Commons had finished with this bill it promptly turned around and passed a bill establishing a fund of \$10 million for a national film industry. I imagine the film industry will be built around several actors, probably a maximum of ten, similar to the C.B.C., so that we will be providing a subsidy of \$1 million per ham actor,—yet they complain about a subsidy on payment of transportation costs which would assist all of Canada.

The committee is to consist of 17 members. Great care must be taken in selecting the members and needless to say the Government will make every effort to select capable men to serve on this committee. However, I would

like to suggest that they also ensure that every region of Canada is represented on that committee, so that each area will have one spokesman thoroughly familiar with its particular problems.

The bill is based on the fact that the railways will now enter free competition. I find it rather odd, when we have the most socialistic government we have ever had in Canada, in this particular aspect they are advocating competition as the basis of the establishment of freight rates.

There is still a question in my mind as to whether or not we will achieve competition. Dr. Borts, who was engaged by eight of the ten provinces of Canada to do a study and make a presentation before the Transport Committee of the other place, pointed out that it is very dubious whether this will establish competition. He illustrated this by stating that, once you go beyond a certain distance, the competition between trucking and railways ceases. Also, there are certain types of goods which cannot be transported economically by highway transportation.

There is the further question in my mind about the ownership by both railway companies of the large number of trucking firms. I doubt that a subsidiary trucking firm of either the Canadian Pacific or the Canadian National is going to provide competition for their parent companies.

However, as the expression goes, "to give the devil his due," there are several features that I appreciate about the bill. I particularly appreciate the establishment of a research division. This is a measure which is long overdue and I hope that this division will not only make recommendations to the Government on various policy matters but that they will also do research work on establishing better forms of transportation.

There is one matter to which I hope consideration will be given, and that is one which we in the Maritimes refer to as the Corridor Road across Maine.

As Senator Brooks said yesterday, the Maritimes, transportationwise, are in the unique position of almost having to circumvent another country in order to reach central Canada. If we could have both rail and road traffic directly across Maine, we would reduce our haulage by several hundred miles.

As I indicated earlier, freight rates have always been a great concern in the Maritimes; in fact they played an important part in the entry of the Maritimes into Confederation. I find, particularly in central Canada,