

It is also true that the very broadness of the concept of Bill C-231 has resulted from the rapid changes and developments of the various modes of transportation during the last few years. In this respect it has followed to some extent the advances and improvements in the field of transportation made in other countries. However, we must recall that it is now six years since the report of the MacPherson Commission was made and, naturally, a great deal of thought has gone into the transportation problems of this country during this period of time.

Although the bill deals with nearly every other mode of commercial transportation, by air, water, motor vehicle and pipe line, the basic and thorniest problems involving transportation in this country relate to railways. The railway history of Canada is of course an amazing story. For sheer fascination I do not think there is anything comparable to it in any part of the world. Here in Canada it related not only to the economic development of a people, but from the very beginning it was also an instrument of politics, an instrument of statecraft, making possible in the first instance the union of the original provinces of Canada. Railway building then became the one essential element without which there could have been no such thing as a Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

In later years the story of the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern Railway is just as fascinating as the earlier story of the Intercolonial and the C.P.R.

While I am speaking of transportation in its widest concept as related to the public interest and development at the hands of the Government, let me remark that in the early days of Canada, at an original cost of about \$245 million there was developed the canal system of central Canada. Later on there followed the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway at an original cost of about \$322 million.

Throughout the years transportation and railway rate making have presented one of the most difficult problems of government. As a result, no less than 32 royal commissions have been appointed to deal with railway affairs. Most of these commissions have dealt with railway problems piecemeal, that is, with particular problems at particular times, and generally in respect of particular regions.

The MacPherson Commission, however, became all-embracing in its work. It covered the whole field of transportation in

Canada. Its purpose was to define and implement a national transportation policy for all Canada. Hence the bill opens with the words:

An act to define and implement a national transportation policy for Canada...

In order to show the breadth and scope of this bill, I can do no better than to read the general words of clause 1 of the bill, referred to as "National Transportation Policy". I read from the bill:

It is hereby declared that an economic, efficient and adequate transportation system making the best use of all available modes of transportation at the lowest total cost is essential to protect the interests of the users of transportation and to maintain the economic well-being and growth of Canada, and that these objectives are most likely to be achieved when all modes of transport are able to compete under conditions ensuring that having due regard to national policy and to legal and constitutional requirements...

And then there follow subclauses (a), (b), (c) and (d), more specifically defining these broad objectives.

As I have said, one can only comprehend the vast scope of the bill when one reads and digests clause 1. This is the framework or the skeleton of the bill while the rest is the flesh on the bones. It was the flesh on the bones which was so ably explained by Senator Deschatelets the other evening.

Throughout the bill the question of a declaration of principles of rate making for the railways naturally assumes a role of tremendous importance. It does so, firstly, because compensation is the lifeblood of any industry and also because of the vast regional differences existing in our country. Hence, throughout the years the problem of maintaining a proper economic balance between the three main regions of Canada, the Maritime Region, the Central Region, and the Western Region has exercised all the ingenuity which we possibly could provide in solving the problem of continuing to hold all parts of our vast country together. Indeed, as testified by Mr. Donald Gordon, the then Chairman of the Board and President of the Canadian National Railway, in his submission before the parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport and Communications—

—A proper foundation for an orderly national development is an efficient transportation system.