

Transportation

members would be sitting, and I say that for this reason. I think the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary was wrong in thinking that this commission would be bound by the rules of solidarity that so obviously bind cabinets. The commissioners do not have to agree or do not have to pretend to agree. Therefore I think that in a review it would be very inexpedient and silly to have an even number of members sitting; surely it is desirable to have an odd number so you can get a majority decision.

As I say, Mr. Chairman, I will look at this point about whether a special quorum should be prescribed, but I really do not think this is necessary. I do not think it would do any harm to make the quorum three in number, though I would not want to make it any larger because there might be circumstances where it could cause undue delays if it were larger than three. But for review purposes I do not see any objection to that; and if we have to make some other amendments in order to make the position technically exact I would be prepared to consider this too.

• (9:00 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Chairman, dealing with section 17 of Bill No. C-231, I really feel that consideration of the membership of these committees could go on for days and days because there are probably many different opinions on the matter. I believe we can nevertheless say that the membership suggested in the bill is satisfactory and deserves a trial.

On the other hand, something else is of concern to me. In the previous speakers' remarks, I detected a tendency to avoid giving authority to the president and the vice president lest they abuse it. As far as I am concerned, I feel this bill seeks to put some order in a confused situation, namely, that of transport. We should give this commission and its leaders, the president and vice president who will be the kingpins of the commission, sufficient authority to enable them to operate efficiently. But if all powers are delegated in such a way as to neutralize their influence and give control to each and everyone, we will find ourselves in the position described in the old saying: Too many cooks spoil the broth. It is to be expected that those who will be appointed to those functions will have sufficient experience of men and things to be able to judge objectively.

[*Mr. Pickersgill.*]

Should it happen that in the course of ordinary or extraordinary affairs, applicants are not satisfied with the rulings even after having appealed and having been heard by the colleagues of the commission members, they can always go before the courts or even call on the government in council.

Mr. Chairman, I have three questions to put to the minister. In fact, what I have to ask is related to matters of much greater concern to me than the membership of this commission, which I find acceptable and satisfactory although it may not be perfect. But, who will find this a perfect formula? And, perhaps, the three questions I intend to ask should have been asked during consideration of clause 16, or perhaps I should wait till later on during consideration of clause 17, but, with your permission, I shall raise them now, because I feel they are important.

I am of the opinion, Mr. Chairman, that this commission will constantly face conflicts of jurisdiction between the provinces and the federal government. For my own satisfaction, and probably for the satisfaction of my colleagues, I should like to direct the following question to the minister; it is divided into three parts.

First, were the provinces consulted before this bill was drafted, in order to avoid, encroachment and conflicts of jurisdiction as much as possible? When this bill is passed and, in the normal course of events, in the exercise of its functions, when this transport commission comes into conflict with the provincial departments of transport, what provision has been made for regular consultations, so that these conflicts, these differences of opinion or this duplication of authority may not get too serious and take regrettable proportions? And if after these consultations, this dialogue between the Canadian Transport Commission and the provincial bodies, no agreement is reached, the matter can then be taken to the courts of law. But has the hon. minister considered a superior court of arbitration to solve conflicts of jurisdiction between the provinces and the commission?

Mr. Chairman, let us not delude ourselves; there will be conflicts. Indeed, the bill has yet to be passed and echoes of conflicting opinions reach us from certain provinces. Considering the sweet disposition of the hon. minister, I know he is not looking for difficulties, for conflicts; on the contrary, he wishes to lessen them.