

*Transportation*

Last night the hon. member for Peace River, in consultation with the committee of this party which deals with transportation, outlined an amendment which he proposes to make at the appropriate time. I commend that amendment to the minister for consideration, along with the suggestion that it be added to the clause in this bill regarding duties and powers. If we are trying to maintain some form of control on behalf of the people over this board, which will have unlimited powers, we must set up machinery through which this parliament has statutory control over its actions. That is the significance of the amendment to be proposed by the hon. member.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his allotted time has expired.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Chairman, I am sure we all want to hear what the hon. member has to say because he is being very constructive.

**The Deputy Chairman:** There seems to be unanimous consent to allow the hon. member to continue.

**Mr. Hamilton:** Thank you very much. My remarks will only take me about five minutes. In Saskatchewan, we were suddenly faced with the creation of a large number of crown corporations and agencies following the election in 1944. The new government set up machinery the like of which has not been duplicated here in Ottawa, or in any other province of which I am aware. This machinery was elemental but it worked. A committee of the legislature was set up, namely the crown corporations committee. Any question asked about crown corporations was directed to the committee which was composed of approximately 75 per cent of the total members of the house. This committee is able to call before it ministers representing various crown corporations, boards of directors, branch heads and division chiefs. They can all be questioned by the elected representatives of the people. This gives the people the feeling that they have some control over the operations of these corporations.

The representatives of the people have control over the operations of these corporations in this way, and also have some method of providing guide lines on policy. In this way the people whom they represent feel they can control the actions of the corporations.

The minister, I am sure, will immediately say that the transportation commission is not

a crown corporation, and that is true. I am sure he will also say that it is a court of record, and that is true, but it is also an administrative body. The only opportunity parliament has to influence an administrative body is through established guide lines. Surely those guide lines should be part of this bill. After the bill becomes law, it is through a parliamentary committee that we can effect policy.

Over the next few days I should like the Minister of Transport to consider the amendment to be proposed by the hon. member for Peace River, because I think its adoption would provide some relief from worry so far as the members of parliament and the people they represent are concerned. I am sure what the hon. member had in mind was that there be experts gradually seconded to the transportation committee whose loyalty would lie with the chairman. These members could develop an expertise in so far as transportation generally is concerned. They could then keep the chairman informed, who in turn would report to parliament through the committee reports.

If this amendment is adopted a standing committee would be established immediately a new parliament meets. Canadians would then have the feeling that competent people with expertise would be representing them so far as transportation problems are concerned. The hon. member did not suggest this would solve all our transportation problems, but he did suggest that this would, in effect, provide some parliamentary control over the board's actions. In this way our transportation systems could be operated in such a way that efficiency would not be hurt and still keep some parliamentary control.

The concept of this bill is good and we wish to support it. But it would make our task easier if the government indicated its acceptance of the amendment to be proposed. This amendment would not interfere with the efficiency of the board, but it would give some form of democratic control. If the government accepted this amendment we would not only benefit from the lessons we have learned as a result of the operations of the C.B.C. and the Board of Broadcast Governors, we would also benefit from the experience of hon. members on all sides of this house.

● (6:00 p.m.)

The placing of this tremendous segment of parliamentary power in the hands of an independent board is a great step. It must be considered in the light of the effect it will