

been informed that the city is at a preliminary study stage, but the scheme is being worked out within the framework of the proposed railroad relocation bill. So that when the bill is passed the work of the consultants will fit the mechanism of the bill. The financial mechanism provided in the bill would mean that the city of London could apply to my department for 50 per cent of the study costs of developing the urban plan, and to the Department of Transport for 50 per cent of the cost of developing the transportation plan.

● (2150)

Then, once the relocation scheme is approved, they can get a grant equal to 50 per cent of the net cost to the railroads of the relocation scheme, plus moneys—we will deal with this when we come to the appropriate section—which might be required if some of the land were used for housing. That is, they could get money for housing or funds for special crossings under Parts II and III of the act.

**Mr. Frank:** I appreciate the minister's explanation, Mr. Chairman, and I hasten to add I appreciate what this bill will provide. I am well aware of the study which is under way. However, I am confused about the 50 per cent and the 80 per cent. Is there any possibility of an 80 per cent area coming into effect by this relocation provision?

**Mr. Basford:** No, Mr. Chairman, but I prefer to answer that when we deal with specific clauses under Part III which relate to funds payable with regard to grade crossings, new grade separations, or the construction of existing ones.

**Mr. Knight:** Mr. Chairman, I approve of the bill. I should like consideration to be given to the tax load borne by communities smaller than Winnipeg or Toronto. I am referring to places like Weyburn. We should examine some of the cost factors involved in this legislation.

In the last 50 minutes I have heard many good questions asked, but have not heard one member say he opposes this bill. Within the last ten days the Federation of Mayors and Municipalities has told us to pass this bill. Considering the present situation of this parliament and the prospect which may arise in the coming weeks, I suggest that this bill should pass. Unless the next speaker says he opposes the bill, I suggest we should pass it. Of course, if someone opposes it we should be prepared to listen to him.

**Mr. Blenkarn:** Mr. Chairman, I have some serious reservations about some proposals of the bill.

**Mr. Knight:** Every member from Toronto should vote for it.

**Mr. Blenkarn:** The definition of "urban development plan" is fatuous. We are told that:

... 'urban development plan' means a plan respecting the development and use of land within or within and adjacent to an urban area whereby it is proposed to control and regulate the use of such land for purposes of industry, commerce, government, recreation, transportation, hospitals, schools, churches, residences, homes for the elderly or for other purposes or classes of users . . .

I suggest that such definition in a bill in the name of the Minister of Transport is fatuous. If the urban development

### *Relocation of Railway Lines*

plan does not provide for a home for the elderly, for a church, for a school or for a recreation centre, it cannot be considered by the minister. Perhaps the minister will say something about that.

Presumably the plan would be examined by the Canadian Transport Commission. Despite what the hon. member for Assiniboia said, members on my side have serious reservations about the Canadian Transport Commission. In September, 1972 560 people worked for the commission. It is now seeking budgetary authority for some 860 employees, representing an increase in employment of 60 per cent. The commission is under the chairmanship of a former member of this House. He was minister of finance but is now head of the Canadian Transport Commission. He is to be responsible for determining if transportation corridors in our cities presently owned by the railways are to be turned over to other authorities for other purposes.

The House must look carefully at the relocation provisions of the bill. While it may be necessary to relocate some railway routes, we must make certain that we do not lose valuable transportation corridors through cities, as cities can no longer obtain them by filing a plan with the commission and having the commission rubber stamp it.

Look at what happened in Ottawa. A conference centre was built where the downtown railway station used to be. That station was convenient for travellers who came from Toronto or Montreal. To get to and from the Ottawa railway station nowadays, you must take a cab or some other conveyance.

As a rapidly changing urban society we face many difficulties. Changes in our urban society will be reviewed by the Canadian Transport Commission. Members are concerned about the personalities of commission members who are to make determinations in these areas. We are concerned because through such determinations we could easily lose valuable existing rights of way in our cities.

That brings me to the situation in Toronto. People are concerned about the CPR line which runs through the city. That line causes some residents annoyance, because trains make a noise. One of the problems is this. That line could be abandoned in compliance with a redevelopment plan, and the result would be, say, some 176 extra acres for housing, for industry or for other innumerable purposes. The right of way could be preserved. However, the sale of a crucial five or even ten acres of that 176 acres might mean that there would no longer be a right of way through the city to meet the city's rapid transit requirements. It is so easy, when pretending to be bright, to be intelligent, to be capable, and with the best intentions in the world for improving the city, to wind up losing valuable rights of way which can never be replaced. The provisions of this bill would make it easy for rights of way to be lost. May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Chairman?

Progress reported.