

*National Transportation Act, 1986*

Granting provinces a right of appeal to the Governor in Council with respect to maintaining services subsidized for reasons of public interest.

Establishing a consultation process with the provinces with respect to the reciprocal agreements on international air transportation.

Finally, use accessibility rather than geographic criteria to identify protected areas in the North under air regulations.

Mr. Speaker, not only the federal Minister of Transport has not studied carefully the representations from his provincial colleague, or taken them into consideration, but he has not accepted a single recommendation from the Quebec Minister of Transport. Nevertheless, the federal Minister would have us believe that he has the support of the provinces to proceed with his Bill. He does not. Provincial Premiers are very upset by the attitude of the Minister.

One of the biggest aberrations of this Bill deals with the competitive line rates. I do not know whether people watching us understand what is involved in this Bill C-18, which is divided in several parts. The first one deals with the new National Transportation Agency; the second with air transportation, about which I was talking just now; the third part is about railway transportation and includes a section about railway lines which sets out various terms and conditions for the railway companies regarding their lines. A fourth part concerns motor vehicle transport, and has a section on trucking, although there is a separate Bill C-19 also about motor vehicle transport. The fifth part is about northern marine resupply services, the sixth about commodity pipelines, the seventh about acquisitions of Canadian transportation undertakings. The last part contains a series of general and transitional provisions and related and consequential amendments.

One of the most complex and difficult sections in this Bill is the one about railways and the new constraints the Government has decided to impose on them. Whereas, on one hand, he recommends a comprehensive deregulation of air, road and sea transportation industries, he says he wants to deregulate rail transportation but at the same time, he is imposing conditions and commitments on both Canadian railways, which is hard to believe. It is for good reason that Minister Côté referred earlier to the free trade negotiations with the Americans when he said: You are about to give everything to the Americans in the transportation area without asking for anything in return. In particular, it is true for rail transportation. American railways will enjoy benefits that their Canadian counterparts will not have. In order to please a few major shippers, the Government is jeopardizing the future of both Canadian railways, but to whose benefit? To the benefit of American railways and trucking companies that will soon be under U.S. control.

One of the worst nonsense which we heard of is the section on competitive line prices. An American expert, Mr. Dempsey, has appeared before the Committee on Transport, and what he

had to say is very significant. I will quote him because this will enlighten us about the lack of concern and the recklessness of the Minister, who was fully at the mercy of a few officials of the Department of Transport who had decided to play a dirty trick on the railways. And if, on one hand, the Liberal Party has no objection and indeed supports this process, namely that we should enable major Canadian shippers to have better prices, we are not prepared on the other hand to go as far as undermining at the same time the very viability of railway companies. As I said in the second reading debate, some officials of the Department of Transport are vengeful or have a hidden agenda. They want to hurt railways, and they used this legislation on deregulation to substantially undermine their viability and prosperity. This is entirely unacceptable, I find it hard to believe that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) has not been perceptive, brave or competent enough to see what was happening. Mr. Dempsey said the following:

● (2020)

[English]

We do not have anything in the United States comparable, as you know, to your proposed competitive line rates. It might be or it might not be and I pass no value judgment on it—

He is an American citizen who obviously does not want to put his nose into Canadian activities. The President of the United States and some Congressmen are not following his example, and they should. Indeed, sometimes we wonder who is running this country, whether it is the President of the United States or the Prime Minister of Canada. However, he said:

It might be or it might not be and I pass no value judgment on it, a good thing to have a rail system in the United States that is like the interstate highway system. It might be a good thing to have railroads compete with one another like supermarkets do. All that I can say about it, without passing a value judgment, is that it would wreck the system in the United States, it would just wreck it, that is all.

He is one of the authorities in the United States who is telling us that competitive line rates in the U.S. would wreck the system.

However, the Minister of Transport of Canada joyfully goes ahead with the competitive line rates idea and imposes it upon Canadian railway companies. It is absolutely unacceptable.

CN, which is a Crown corporation under the umbrella of the Minister of Transport, despite the obvious displeasure of the Minister, had the courage to say the following about competitive line rates:

Nowhere in the world is the arrangement of physical access to one railway's line from another forced by legislation.

Some of us have called the provision a confiscation of assets, because our railways, respectively, have spent millions upon millions in building roadbeds, tunnels, bridges and other infrastructures to win freight and intermodal customers.

Others refer to the idea as turning the railways into a communal right of way over which anyone could move without guaranteed proper recompense to the owner.

Certainly the view of CN is shared by CP. The idea of competitive line rates is unprecedented; nowhere has it been