

Transportation of Dangerous Goods

The specific means whereby the bill provides for the implementation of this program were dealt with at length by the former minister of transport when this was introduced for debate at second reading on February 16, 1979. However, I should like to conclude with some final remarks on the international implications of this particular piece of legislation.

To the extent that any regulations have been observed with respect to the transportation of dangerous goods by road, they were those published in title 49 of the United States code of federal regulations. For obvious reasons those regulations were also the ones adopted by the railways in this country. However, for equally obvious reasons, the marine and air modes had to follow international standards.

Many people, including myself, were afraid, since the bulk of our trade travels to and from the United States, that any deviation from their regulations would result in an artificial trade barrier which could only work to the detriment of manufacturers and traders in this country. At the same time, it was becoming increasingly obvious that many U.S. regulations were out of date, inappropriate to Canadian transport conditions, and incompatible with the needs of the marine and air modes, even in the United States itself.

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Naturally, these facts were also apparent to the United States department of transport, and our attempts to incorporate international standards in our legislation have been paralleled by similar activity south of the border. The result is that both countries are moving, for all practical purposes, in the same direction at approximately the same speed, although we have the slight advantage of being innovators rather than reformers. In any event, there is no reason to suppose that the reciprocal agreements that already exist in respect of railway transportation, to recognize each others laws to the extent that they may differ as a result of national circumstances, should not continue to exist and be extended to cover all modes of transportation.

When I first contemplated this speech, Mr. Speaker, I intended at this point to conclude with the following remarks, and I quote them verbatim:

I fear that the lack of headline attracting accidents involving dangerous goods in Canada may be due more to good luck than to good management. The bill and the associated safety program, while not preventing accidents entirely, should go a long way towards reducing the risk of their occurrence or reducing their impact.

The accident at Mississauga does not, I think, require any revision of these statements, with one important exception. It was good management and not good luck that enabled the Peel Regional Police Force to cope with the situation with a degree of efficiency that has attracted worldwide attention. They, as well as the emergency response personnel and, indeed, the citizens of Mississauga and the surrounding district, gave us all cause to be proud of them and of our country.

In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I hope that members on both sides of this House still share the view of the previous Parliament that the enactment of legislation governing the transpor-

[Mr. Mazankowski.]

tation of dangerous goods is important and overdue. I know that both the provinces and industry are anxious to have this matter dealt with as soon as possible. I am very pleased, therefore, to introduce this measure at this time. I look forward to the contribution of all other hon. members and, indeed, I look forward to the committee hearings and the witnesses who will be appearing before the committee during considerations of this bill.

Mr. Ed Lumley (Stormont-Dundas): Mr. Speaker, I too am honoured to participate in the second reading debate on Bill C-25, and particularly so since it is the first piece of legislation being presented to the House by the new Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski). As the minister has indicated, this is not the first time we have seen this legislation before the House.

I am sure the minister made an oversight when he only mentioned Mr. Marchand's contribution in the year 1973. I think he forgot his western colleague, the Hon. Otto Lang, from Saskatoon-Humboldt, who, on August 4, 1977, announced a major safety program to regulate transportation of dangerous goods, to produce compatible safety standards for transshipment of dangerous goods between air, surface and marine transport, with dangerous goods to include explosives as well as inflammable, poisonous and radioactive material. The then minister suggested the new act would ensure that the responsibility for the transportation of dangerous goods would be shared by manufacturers of transport equipment and containers, producers, shippers and purchasers of dangerous goods, as well as carriers and operators of transportation facilities. In short, what the minister was announcing at that time was a coherent step to set up regulations and standards across the country.

Very little has changed, in spite of some statements regarding tightening up, with the benefit of hindsight, in Bill C-25. As a matter of fact I think it is almost 99 per cent the same with the exception of two major changes, the first being that during an inquiry the minister may, at his discretion, pending the submission of a report, take measures to alter or cease transportation of dangerous goods. The second major difference, I think, is that if, after 12 months, there is no agreement with a province to enforce the act, the minister may enforce the act in that province.

With all due respect, it is rather ironic that this government would institute that clause as opposed to the previous government when you consider the confrontation—co-operative theory which obviously the government has been advocating since the pre-election time.

I would like to read a paragraph out of *Hansard* which I think expresses our position about as well as it could be expressed. Let me read from page 3330 of *Hansard* for February 16, 1979, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, at the outset may I say that our party supports the principle and therefore the major objective of this piece of legislation. I believe it is fair to say as well that we acknowledge the need for such a piece of legislation, given the fact that there has been an increasing number of fatal and near fatal incidents involving dangerous goods, which unquestionably highlights the need for a co-ordinated law which is put before us in the form of this bill now, and to