

If that were not bad enough, there is Subclause (4) of Clause 8 to contend with. That subclause states that the provincial transport board is not required to issue a licence referred to in subclause (2). This is again from the federal Government which is telling a provincial board what it has to do when it does not have the agreement of the provincial governments.

Then in Subclause (5) it is stated that a provincial transport board "shall" and in Subclause (6) it states that the provincial transport board "may not".

What is wrong with this Bill? It is obvious what is wrong with it. It is a gigantic intrusion into provincial jurisdiction without the approval of provincial boards.

I could not care less if it were without the approval of the provincial Governments but with the approval of the people affected in the provinces. Here we have the Government pointing out that there shall not be public hearings, that a province may, a province shall, a province ought to. The Government has done this without the approval of the provincial Governments, without the input of local truckers or the input of the local people who have to pay for their services.

In effect, this is a Bill which will say to poor Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and British Columbia—the extremities of the country: "You will no longer have the control that you had over who delivers goods and services in your area of the country. You are going to accept what we say. We even lay down for you what your provincial boards can and cannot do. We will not stop there. We will say whether you can have public hearings or not".

That is an outrageous intrusion not only into provincial jurisdiction but into the jurisdiction of the public. The jurisdiction of the public deals with having a say over what its transportation network will be like, whether or not it will have to pay more for the transportation of its goods, whether or not there will be one trucker left in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island or British Columbia.

When there are large trucking outfits that can travel the country it is obvious that under this legislation they will be controlled by federal jurisdiction which is imposed at the provincial level. Basically, I would have to say that with the three amendments that are put forward by the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin), the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan (Mr. Angus) and the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) the Government of Canada is surpassing the bounds of good judgment when it comes to relations with the provinces and relations with the people who live in those provinces.

The board referred to in Clause 8 is normally referred to in most provinces as a public utilities board. There are different names for it in different provinces. A trucker will go in and apply to that board for a licence. Sometimes within provinces the board has already issued licences to companies that are established in that area, or to companies which normally provide service in that area.

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The boards also work with the Departments of Finance to regulate the movement of trucks. That is what this board referred to in this particular clause in each province does. These boards even make regulations pertaining to a trucker buying gasoline.

A trucker cannot fill up his truck with gasoline in the State of Maine and go through four or five provinces without paying sales tax on the gasoline in that truck. That is what the weigh scale stations are for. We often wonder what they are for. They are not just to weigh the commodities in the trucks. They are there to measure the amount of gasoline that is in a truck's tank. The people at the weigh station ask the truckers where they are going in their particular province. If the trucker says: "We are going on this particular road for x-number of miles and we are not going to buy any gas or oil for the truck", then the department in the particular province will compute the amount of tax one would have to pay if one had purchased one's fuel in that particular province. Every trucking company knows about that.

The reason this is done is that it might be possible to find some trucks with a couple 100-gallon tanks on either side and the trucker has gassed up in the State of Maine. In Maine we do not have to pay the taxes that we pay at the provincial and federal levels in Canada. The price of gasoline is much cheaper since the oil has been exported by Canada to the United States to be refined.

In this clause the federal Government makes a massive intrusion into provincial jurisdiction. What we strongly object to is that it is without the approval of the provincial government and without the adoption of a national safety code. The federal Government says: "No public hearings. You will not have a say, general public, in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island or British Columbia. It is the Government of Canada. Here is what we are dishing out. Take it whether you like it or not".

● (2050)

**Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the points raised by the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin) and the Hon. Member for Gander—Twillingate (Mr. Baker).

The whole question of motor vehicle transport in Canada has always been a complex one, given the federal-provincial jurisdictional split. Over the years, as our society has become more sophisticated, motor vehicle transport has become increasingly complicated.

All of the studies done over the years indicated the need for a federal-provincial agreement in this area. I am referring here to studies done by the Economic Council of Canada going back to 1978, interdepartmental studies conducted under the auspices of the previous Government, as well as the many studies conducted by the provinces.