

EVIDENCE

TUESDAY, August 19, 1958.
2 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I see a quorum. Today we are on Bill C-52, an Act to amend the Railway Act. We have the Minister of Transport with us, and I am going to ask the minister to say a word.

Hon. GEORGE HEES (*Minister of Transport*): Well, if you wish me to, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. As you know, this bill was put through the resolution stage in the house last night for the first and second readings, and then went up for examination here in this committee.

If there are any questions you would like to ask on the various sections, technical questions, or anything else to do with this whole matter of railway crossings, Mr. Shepard, the Chief Commissioner of the Board of Transport Commissioners and members of the board are here, and if you would like to ask any questions as we go along, Mr. Shepard will be very glad to supply the information. I am sure.

The CHAIRMAN: On clause 1, gentlemen.

Mr. SMITH (*Simcoe North*): When Mr. Gordon was giving evidence before the committee on the government owned railways, aircraft lines and ships, the question of reflective markings on the sides of railway cars came up, and if I remember correctly what Mr. Gordon said was that he did not want to have any part of it, or words to that effect, because of the number of railway cars that came in here from American lines; and that, in fact, a train would then have possibly part of the train marked with reflective markings on the sides of the cars, and the other part not, which might lure people into thinking it was a break.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, Mr. Shepard, Chairman of the Board of Transport Commissioners for Canada is here, and I will ask him to answer that question.

CLARENCE D. SHEPARD, Q.C., (*Chief Commissioner, Board of Transport Commissioners for Canada*): Yes, Mr. Chairman, I think the short answer to the question is that partial protection is better than none, of course. On the point that the questioner just made—

Mr. SMITH (*Simcoe North*): That was not my comment, that was Mr. Gordon's.

Mr. SHEPARD: This is a matter, I might explain to the committee, that has been under active consideration by the Transport Board in our operating department for several years. We have had representations from many groups in Canada to do something about this. We have discussed it with the railways in an endeavour to persuade them to do it, but the difficulty we ran into there was that it was a costly procedure for the railways to embark upon, although in principle they accepted it.

I do know particularly the Great Northern Railway in the United States, based on St. Paul, has not only done an extensive amount of studying on the reflectorizing of the sides of cars, but they have actually taken on the job of painting the sides of their cars with reflectorizing paint. They feel this is having a good effect in reducing accidents. It is for this reason that the transport board is very much behind this suggestion in the bill.