

The Committee supports the Royal Commission on National Passenger Transportation in its recommendations designed to persuade users to reduce the amount of environmental damage they cause by ensuring that those who travel less will not pay the environmental remediation costs imposed by those who travel more. All of the modes should be subject to the same regulatory standards and changes.⁹⁷

Recommendation No. 23

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada consider the advisability of using economic instruments, such as tolls and incentives, to encourage the use of public transportation systems and more environmentally-friendly modes of travel.

Darrell Richards suggested that free parking at work be considered a taxable benefit, while tax deductions should be extended for transit passes. The Committee agrees that the modal shift of people from cars to walking, bicycling and transit would indeed award Canada a tremendous reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. However, the Committee sees an equitable transportation tax system as a quagmire of largely unenforceable regulations. Using the examples offered by Darrell Richards, would a motorist living in an area not served by public transit have the same taxable benefit as a motorist living on a bus route? Would a tax deduction for transit passes not discriminate against more environmentally-friendly citizens who walk and cycle to work?

The problems facing the shift to more energy-efficient modes of transport are indeed largely ones of attitude; so pervasive are these attitudes that it is unlikely they could be quickly solved by any recommendations this Committee might suggest. Rather, the challenge can only be addressed by reforming our attitudes, and altering our thinking and traditional ways of doing things. The Committee feels that the long-term solutions to the problems addressed at Rio will only occur by the full integration of sustainable development objectives into all decision-making, in every sector of Canadian society.

⁹⁷ Royal Commission on National Passenger Transportation, *Directions, The Final Report of the Royal Commission on National Passenger Transportation Summary*, 1992.