

last decade of this century at the earliest.

The guidelines covering international bridges state that a bridge "shall be constructed and operated by an authority that is genuinely public in its character". While there are indications that at the time the guidelines were established, this was not necessarily intended to mean a purely government entity, in the light of changes in the political and social climate, it would seem that this interpretation of the guideline is more realistic, particularly when one considers that the public interest is paramount and that a monopoly service is being provided. Except in the case of new international bridges, which should be built by a public authority in accordance with the guidelines, public authorities can only be set up to take direct control over other bridges on reversion. Since the Government favours the public authority idea, it seems clear that in future, reversion should not be delayed and that international bridges should revert at the earliest possible date.

The Ontario proposal envisages an overall public authority and as pointed out earlier, the effectiveness of such a body would be in direct proportion to the number of bridges, and particularly of profitable bridges which could be placed under its control. If an authority were to be set up at the present time, it is questionable whether it would be a viable entity, since of the three government bridges, only the Blue Water Bridge could be described as a profitable enterprise. This situation would be somewhat improved following the reversion of the Thousand Islands Bridge in 1976, but a firm stand is going to be required if this reversion is to take place on time. The Federal Government might have to be prepared to accept the need to subsidize a largely regulatory authority in the early years unless some satisfactory method could be found to bring additional profitable bridges under its direct control as soon as possible. This would require some form of accelerated reversionary process, and the extent to which this is legally feasible is a