

movement of people efficiently, safely and economically between our cities is to be carried out. Particularly now that we are confronted with an ongoing energy crisis we have to be ready to put more and more stress upon passenger rail travel.

One of the essential elements of good passenger rail service is that it be attractive and convenient. So I end by making this my last point of caution to members in respect to this bill, a bill which, along with my colleague the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Leggatt), I welcome, but which has to be looked at nevertheless very closely. Perhaps the main reason I welcome this bill—and this may be a little philosophical—is that it is an indication that we are finally moving toward government ownership or control of the railways as opposed to railway ownership or control of the government.

**Mr. Joseph-Philippe Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity of saying a few words on the second reading of Bill C-27. As the hon. Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Basford) made clear, this legislation will be of great value to Canada's municipalities. It provides significant assistance not only to urban development and redevelopment, but also will greatly facilitate the implementation of improved urban transit and, in addition, will more than double federal financial support in respect of public protection and convenience at railway crossings.

As many members of the House may know, this legislation in a certain sense can be said to have had its beginnings really and truly in western Canada, namely in Winnipeg. A few years ago the city of Winnipeg, together with the government of Manitoba, approached the Ministry of Transport for assistance regarding a major railway problem in the city. At that time it appeared the best solution might be to consider relocating railway lines in a major way rather than continuing to build and rebuild large and expensive grade separations near the heart of the city.

**Mr. Woolliams:** You speak better from your own notes.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** This is all I have at the present time, but I will make some comments when the hon. member speaks. I have noticed on occasion that he cannot even read his.

The Ministry of Transport provided 75 per cent of the cost of a \$500,000 study which examined in detail a number of alternative transportation plans, each with its own railway relocation scheme. This effort was an excellent example of tri-level co-operation in which the federal government, the government of Manitoba, the city of Winnipeg and both railways worked together in a spirit of mutual co-operation.

Winnipeg is but one example of many cities in Canada where railway relocations may be the best answer to deal with situations where the railway lines have been in place for perhaps 100 years and are now a serious impediment to desirable urban development or redevelopment. Canada is also fortunate in that many of our cities are well endowed with excellently situated rail rights of way which, if made

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available for rapid transit use, would greatly contribute to the solution of urban transportation problems.

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This legislation provides that the CTC may order existing rail lines to be freed of other rail traffic so that they can be used for rapid transit. Today one of the greatest difficulties in moving forward with intermediate capacity transit systems using modern streetcars, reserved lane bus systems, or perhaps some of the new technology systems currently under development, is the problem of acquiring the necessary corridors of land in which to operate such urban transit systems. Without the availability of railway rights of way often the only recourse is the expropriation of very expensive strips of land, including much valuable residential and other developed real estate. I need not remind the members of the House how difficult it is these days, and how wrong from a social justice point of view, to expropriate people's homes. I personally feel that this legislation fits perfectly the kind of legislation which will facilitate increased tri-level co-operation in many urban matters where action is so urgently needed.

The thrust of this bill is consistent with the direction the government is taking with regard to the whole field of a renaissance in the railway mode. We are not only looking at the need for greater and more effective use of passenger rail services in Canada, but we are also fully aware of the need to implement this policy in concert with many urban needs.

There are a number of other railway issues in Canada today. Many of these are social issues rather than economic ones relating to railway operations. Often from a social benefit or an export benefit point of view railway operations, which in themselves may not be economic, are none the less viable operations.

So far my remarks have dealt with the urban transit and urban development aspects of this legislation. I should like for the next few minutes to point out that this bill also contains valuable new provisions in the matter of public protection and convenience at railway crossings which are embodied in Parts II and III of this legislation. These are concerned with special grants for separations and modernization of the railway grade crossing fund.

The provisions relating to grade crossings and grade separations follow recommendations by the Railway Transport Committee of the Canadian Transport Commission to increase the limits of federal assistance for railway grade separation projects. Such expansion is intended to bring grant provisions into line with the increased costs being experienced in the construction of overpasses and subways. The cost of providing safe railway crossings and grade separations has climbed over the years. Such installations, especially in large centres, have become extremely costly. The bill provides increased federal assistance either through provisions in the railway grade crossing fund, which are continued in Part III of the bill, or through new provisions for special grants for separations, which are contained in Part II. The proposed new federal assistance covers level crossing protection work, reconstruction of, or improvement to, existing grade separations, and construction of new grade separations.