

*National Transportation Act, 1986*

must guarantee the free circulation of goods and people, without constraints, hindrance or intervention other than that of the free market, the free choice.

To provide all Canadians, wherever they live, and their communities with an extra opportunity to control their economic and regional development, the new transportation policy will have to stress competition between the various systems of transportation and between competitors within each system. This is what our reform is proposing. Yet, Mr. Speaker, people can still be found who continue to deny this fact, who would like the *status quo* to be maintained, and who strongly wish things would remain as they are now. Let us ask ourselves whether it is normal for consumers, contractors and passengers, in a country such as ours which relies very heavily on transportation networks, not always to be able to choose the carrier which they feel would provide the best service at the lowest cost.

In the various regions, the spin-offs from our transport reforms on economic development are many, and, in many cases, immediate. Our purpose in freeing the transportation network users from a whole series of constraints is to encourage the most enterprising Canadians to go ahead with the creation of new jobs and the production of consumer goods at competitive prices.

In Canada, the prices of ordinary consumer goods, among others, are closely linked with transportation costs. To limit, through regulation that do not reflect the new realities, the availability of various means of transportation and the free negotiation of rates could only be detrimental to the economic and social development of our country. The user must once and for all be freed from hindrances and obstacles through universal mobility. You know just how much I am dedicated to the promotion of the handicapped. These citizens should be able to avail themselves of the same services as all our other fellow citizens. Like them, from now on, they must be freed from these very hindrances and obstacles.

Mr. Speaker, it is high time the Federal Government made these major and long-awaited changes to the transportation network regulations. These changes are basic and can only be made here, in Parliament, through an amendment to the Act which is 20 years overdue.

The package of proposals found in *Freedom to move* is the result of a whole series of consultation with those who are directly or indirectly involved in the transportation world in Canada, as well as the Federal and Provincial Governments. These consultations were carried out in all parts of Canada by the Transport Committee.

The results of these meetings clearly show that Canadians want some major changes and a comprehensive reform in our transport system. Our will to change the transport system must be considered in its general context, that is within a comprehensive economic policy under which the "Made in Canada" principle constitutes a priority and is always present.

Let us look more closely at the contents of this Bill. First, I would like to speak about air transport. The situation of air transport in Canada is such that simply to maintain present economic regulations would be a disservice to air carriers, shippers and travellers. We began to make some changes in our domestic air transport policy in 1984 by reducing and simplifying the regulations.

But we could not stop there, Mr. Speaker. A large number of important issues had yet to be settled. We are now proposing to pare down economic regulations to take into account North American realities and specific objectives. These objectives are to improve and, if need be, increase services to the public, and to provide carriers with reasonable opportunities for competition on the Canadian market.

Another one of our objectives is to eliminate eventually needless costs and paperwork for the industry and consumers.

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For an air carrier, the test to enter the Canadian transport market will be whether he can prove that he is ready, willing and able to provide a certain service while meeting the related safety and insurance requirements. For all practical purposes, passenger and freight tariff regulations are eliminated. However, in the case of services in a monopoly situation, the new federal control agency will be able to hear the complaints of users from a given region and make a ruling. Otherwise, users will be able to choose the company which provides the best prices and service.

In the regions north of the 55th parallel, our Bill aims at providing more competition for the benefit of residents of these regions while guaranteeing essential services in those limited and remote markets. Our Bill also aims at preventing monopolistic prices. Northern communities and all carriers will be able to express their views on the issuing of operating lines to new contractors. Prices and rate increases will still be regulated. The abandonment of any service in the North will require 60 days notice. In other words, Mr. Speaker, everything in our reform has been done to respect the interests of citizens, even and especially if they live in a remote area.

The new legislation provides financial assistance for certain domestic services judged to be essential. To provide these services, we shall proceed by calls to tender whenever possible, as it seems to be the most effective and profitable method.

I would now like to speak about rail transport. I should point out that I have a personal interest in this sector as my father worked for the CN for 33 years. Once more, our Bill contains major reforms that will benefit both carriers and users. The new legislation will for the first time allow shippers to negotiate privately with Canadian railway companies. This means that both shippers and railway carriers will be able to negotiate better rates and better services. This is good news for railway clients but it is also very important for our Canadian railways which will then be able to compete with U.S. carriers for transborder traffic.