

### Railway Act

assessments of company accident prevention programs were completed.

These comprehensive assessments of safety audits include, in addition to an assessment of working conditions and work practices, a critical review of a company's safety policy, its education and training program, the attitude of management and employees to safety, the in-plant safety inspection system, accident investigation and reporting procedures, etc., wherein lie the root causes of most safety problems.

Development of a national system of accident statistics is now well under way and is expected to produce valuable information for the prevention of accidents in the near future. The National Film Board is presently producing a film which will be used in training accident investigators in the proper investigation of accidents. A second film on the conduct of safety inspections is now in the planning stage. In so far as it lies within the area of responsibility of the Minister of Labour and his department, every effort will be made to improve the conditions under which workers on Canadian railroads must earn their living. I thank the hon. member for bringing a bill of undoubted merit to the attention of the House.

**Mr. Len Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Skoberg) for bringing the attention of the House to the subject of railway accidents through the introduction of Bill C-47. I know that other hon. members want to participate in this debate, so I will not speak at length. However, I want to express my general support for the principles contained in the bill.

I was not in the House when the hon. member began his remarks, but I understand he mentioned the accident which took place on February 15 and caused the death of three outstanding people who happened to come from the city of Kamloops. The loss of the lives of these men caused a great deal of anguish and concern throughout Kamloops and the surrounding communities. Indeed, this particular accident caused a great deal of concern across the country. I met with officials of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the United Transport Union on this important subject. One of the big complaints that all these gentlemen had was the lack of information available to families, workers and the community as a whole.

I commend the hon. member for bringing in this bill. I do not know what its fate will be, but the general principles involved are sound and I hope that something along the lines suggested by the hon. member can be done by the government in the near future.

● (4:40 p.m.)

My good friend from Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault) spoke of railway safety and his remarks are very pertinent. In this age of technology, with men going to the moon, literally anything can be achieved. We know that 90 per cent to 95 per cent of the scientists who ever lived, live now—so we are in the greatest age of technology that man has ever known. Certainly these kinds of accidents do not need to happen. Surely we can find

[Mr. Perrault.]

some means of detecting them well in advance: they do not need to happen.

**Mr. Eymard Corbin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Forestry):** I am pleased to stand in the House today, Mr. Speaker, and say a few words on Bill C-47, because I feel that I can support some of the proposals contained in this most reasonable of bills.

[Translation]

This bill, entitled: "An Act to amend the Railway Act (Notice of Accidents)", is sponsored by the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Skoberg). During the first two sessions of this Parliament, I have had the opportunity to sit, with this hon. member, on the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications and I know that his intentions are good and that he is guilty of no partisanship in submitting this legislative proposal. I am therefore happy to support him objectively and in a spirit of co-operation, for the essential purpose of serving the interests of the Canadian people.

The last time I spoke in this House on the subject of railways, the provincial press, and to a certain extent the national one, got somewhat excited and concluded that some of my statements constituted an attack against the government. If somebody is to be blamed, it is, indeed, the railways authorities which do not care at all, occasionally, for public opinion and the criticism expressed strongly enough in this House by the people's representatives. But I will forget that for the moment, and I will speak about the bill.

As regards its provisions about notices of accidents, I am not against them. I commend the intent of the sponsor of this bill and I leave it to more knowledgeable members to discuss its legal aspects or its practical consequences.

I think that this is a solid, well-thought out bill which should have been introduced long ago. Why do I take a special interest in this bill? Simply because I am permanently interested in the activity of the railway company which serves my province, and more particularly, my region.

I have the interests of railway employees at heart. An hon. member just told me that there is no railway service in my riding. In fact there was one and although there is not much left of it, I want to discuss it just the same. I have at heart the interests, the security at work of railway employees, and even though we do not have many opportunities for direct intervention in their favour in the House, I would be reluctant to miss this one.

My father who was a railway employee, worked as a roadman—as we say here—with pick and shovel, in fair weather or foul for 42 years. I also wielded pick and shovel at his side on the railroad, in summer under a blinding sun and in the intense cold of winter. I know the occupational hazards, I know what I am talking about. It amuses me to hear Canadians, some of them my constituents, tell me sometimes: "You are a member of Parliament, you have a job in Ottawa, you have no problem. How can you understand our needs?"