

will need for the increased numbers of small truckers to make sure that we have safe trucks on the highways under conditions that would be found acceptable. Where transportation operations are concerned, safety does cost money. Corners are being cut by financially strapped carriers, and accident rates are rising. In the United States that was a clearly foreseeable consequence, and one that we should take careful note of before we move into this field, helter-skelter, without giving careful reconsideration to the whole content of this Bill and its thrust. I am not saying that deregulation is bad. I am saying that we must have in place the proper standards of safety before we move. As yet, those are not in place.

According to the study that was done in Miami, highway safety is deteriorating. The motor carrier accident rate per million miles is rising. Equipment is getting older, as many carrier fleets age, and equipment replacement has become financially difficult for many of these carriers. Maintenance is necessarily deferred or skimmed by financially strapped carriers. Over-all, many mature more experienced and more highly paid union drivers have been replaced by younger less experienced and lower paid non-union drivers. One symptom of this is the current clamour for a comprehensive national truck driver licensing and record maintenance system in the United States. What has been done here?

Another aspect of safety is the combined overloading and "speeding syndrome" that is clearly associated with this competitive milieu. Deferred maintenance, overloading, and speeding are not new phenomena in the motor carrier industry. It is an offence against common sense to claim that the extremely competitive pressures that will be brought about by deregulation will not result in some operators cutting corners where there is clear though improper, and in some cases illegal opportunity to reduce costs accompanied by a felt need to do so in order to survive. The wish to survive is the strongest of all human instincts. Whether it is personal survival or business survival it has to be taken into account.

The pressure for safe motor carrier operations on the road is less than perhaps it is in respect of air, ocean, or rail transport. But there is no denying that a bad truck accident is serious to the family of the individuals who are impacted upon. It does not matter if it is one person, 100 persons, or 1,200 persons who have been hurt because of poor standards that we are prepared to adopt in a badly perceived procedure toward the Bill.

With respect to the whole safety standard, I have an ongoing and abiding concern that I have tried to express in the House. I strongly recommend that this Bill not be brought to committee until the whole area of national safety standards has been determined, until there is resolution to provincial and federal jurisdiction, and until we know what the content of the national safety standards will be.

I wish to bring to your attention that California is presently re-regulating the deregulated trucking industry. I have an article here with the heading, "California re-regulation: Start of a trend?". Is it the start of a trend? The main reason cited

Motor Vehicle Transport Act, 1986

for re-regulating the golden state's trucking industry is that it is a source of concern, and the source of the concern is safety. In spite of continued, strenuous efforts by deregulation advocates, who argue that there is no real connection between economic deregulation and highway safety, California's actions which began in 1986 could be an early indication that it is just not working, and people are concerned. I can only say that I am concerned about the National Safety Code.

● (1550)

I would like to have address the whole area of foreign ownership and corporate concentration and the issues behind it. I think the American experience has something to tell us in that regard as well. Certainly I would like to have a look at the reverse onus of responsibility, which is a divesting of our responsibility. I strongly urge the Government to stop the Bill now and to do its homework. Then it could bring in some normal and proper procedures for the health and safety of the country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Taylor): On questions and comments, the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan (Mr. Angus).

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, you look good there, by the way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Angus: Could the Hon. Member take a few moments in this question and answer period to give us an indication of how she feels the Bill relates to foreign control of our trucking industries by other countries, particularly the United States? Does she feel that there will be any impact upon our cultural sovereignty because of this move?

Mrs. Finestone: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the Hon. Member raised that issue because the Bill has absolutely no provisions for the setting of any limitation on foreign takeovers of Canadian transportation companies.

Mr. Boudria: It is unbelievable.

Mrs. Finestone: It is unbelievable. The only guidelines are these. All mergers and takeovers over \$20 million and over 10 per cent of the voting shares of a Canadian transportation firm will be reviewed by the Governor in Council. All those below those set ceilings will be reviewed in the normal procedure by Investment Canada. The guiding principle in this section is that all investments which have been found or deemed to have been found likely to be of net benefit to Canada will be approved. The major difficulty is that it leaves the acquisitions of over \$20 million of foreign investors at the discretion of the Governor in Council.

Unfortunately we have been subjected to a large series of unpleasant events which perhaps allow for meddling and muddling in the affairs of Government. If we can close any loophole and not allow any Minister of the Crown any kind of opportunity to misuse his power, it would be in the best