

authorities may well be subjected to undue local political pressures which would thwart the achievement of goals of general interest. Government control over bridges in such circumstances would tend to be dispersed and ineffective. If one pursues the individual bridge course, this forces concentration on the economic viability of each bridge, but it is arguable that this should not be a sole criterion, and indeed, in the present social and political climate, it is questionable whether decisions can be made on a purely economic basis. If social considerations are to play a role, then government must be prepared to accept uneconomic bridges and subsidize them, unless, of course, some means can be found to transfer funds from profitable to unprofitable bridges.

The greatest weakness of the individual bridge authority arrangement relates not, however, to the operation and maintenance aspects, but rather to construction. Prior to the guidelines, a private body merely presented a proposal to Government, and signified its willingness to accept the inherent risks. Under the guidelines, however, a bridge may only be constructed on the Canadian side by a public authority but presumably, such an authority could only be set up after all the ground work had been done. The initiative for deciding that a bridge should be built and for appointing an authority would rest with the government and at the present time, neither level of government appears to want to become involved in this process, the federal government because it sees the province as being in the best position to assess need, and the provincial government because it believes that the initiative should rest with the level of government enjoying legislative authority. Since no new toll structures have been built since the guidelines came into effect, there is considerable doubt as to how the initiative can properly be taken in conformity with the principles expressed in the