

### *Railways*

Minister of Transport has taken a very enlightened and reasonable approach and is prepared to allow this bill to go forward to the standing committee and, hopefully, become law.

I congratulate the minister. I congratulate my friends in the Conservative Party, in particular the hon. member for Vegreville. I also congratulate the hon. member for Regina West who has also taken a very enlightened view toward the passage of this bill at second reading stage.

**Mr. Charles Mayer (Portage-Marquette):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Collenette) for bringing this bill forward.

Transportation is a major and a vital concern to Canadians. In fact, because of the nature of our country, I would argue that transportation is probably the major factor that we need to look at in order to keep our country together and productive. We do have an excellent transport committee. I have had the privilege to be a part of that committee since I was elected to this House. I have seen some of the fine work that it has done and I think that if this bill does come before that committee it will then be in front of a very excellent committee.

Prior to the Christmas break we spent many hours dealing with Bill C-18, which had been before this House and committee for over a period of some three years. We worked long and hard in order to get the bill proclaimed and put into force as quickly as we could. There were some excellent witnesses and some excellent questions asked by members of the committee of witnesses appearing before the committee to develop Bill C-18, which deals with the transportation of dangerous goods.

That is really what we are talking about here today. We are talking about the railways and the safety and protection of individuals, the most important commodity that we have in this country. So in that respect it is an important bill, though I do have a few concerns with respect to it.

Before I get to the concerns that I have with the bill, I would like to add that I think we have an excellent chairman on the transport committee. Although I have not had an opportunity to serve on a large number of committees since I have been elected to this House, the chairman of the transport committee is a very excellent chairman and I know he enjoys the support of all members of that committee.

As I said, the intentions of this bill are certainly admirable. I have had much experience with respect to problems that railways have with livestock on rights-of-way. The hon. member opposite talked about the type of fencing that was required by law to protect livestock and he read from the Railway Act. In some cases this type of fencing does not work since livestock always manage to get through fences, being what they are. I have been at the scene of some very unfortunate accidents to both horses and cattle. It is not a happy situation. I can certainly understand the concern the parliamentary secretary has when he talks about the unfortunate accident that occurred with one of his young constituents.

It is true that a four-foot fence is required by law to keep livestock off rights-of-way. It is not a chain-link fence though, it is simply a barbed-wire fence, which would not be at all adequate when it comes to protecting children from rights-of-way and the kind of problems that could arise with a train coming down the track. As children, I think all of us have fooled around on railway tracks, have heard trains coming, have crossed bridges and done other things which could have gotten us into serious trouble with locomotives and trains. I think in light of these personal experiences we are familiar with the kind of force that trains and locomotives have. We need to do as much as we can to protect children and adults from the kind of awesome force that trains have. I am familiar with some of the problems that arise when animals get onto railway tracks. As I said, I was a part of the committee which studied quite extensively Bill C-18, which dealt with the transportation of dangerous goods.

One of the concerns I have with respect to Bill C-227, which is the bill in front of us, and which the mover of the bill took into account, is that he has apparently had some discussion with municipalities and the people who will be affected by this bill. That is why I feel that, if this bill is to reach the committee, it is important that the committee have a chance to hear from the people who will be affected by this new law. We all know that when it comes to the expenditure of tax dollars, which proclamation of this bill would require, the people who will be required to expend this money have a say in what kind of laws will be governing them. After all, they are the people who will be responsible to the ratepayers for the expenditure of the taxes that are raised. It would seem very appropriate that the committee call before them the municipalities and whatever governmental bodies will be affected by this bill if, in fact, it is passed. Without this action the bill could cause some problem in terms of the municipalities not wanting to comply with it.

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Chain-link fencing is not inexpensive; it is a very expensive type of fencing. In view of that, it is even more incumbent on us to get the bill to committee this evening and give it a thorough examination. When you start talking about chain-link fencing going through some of the towns, one must consider that in some of the larger cities you could have almost 100 miles of track. If you wanted to start fencing with six-foot high chain-link fencing, you could end up with a very large expenditure.

The other concern I have is that other avenues of protection of children should be explored so that we do not simply rely on a six-foot chain-link fence, because the human mind, being what it is, can find many ingenious ways to get over, under, and inside that kind of fence. If we are to proceed with this law which requires six-foot high chain-link fencing to be constructed along railway rights-of-way through some of the more populous areas, we should ensure that we are not incurring expense for chain-link fencing when there may be other ways of protecting children and others from getting on to railway