

Hon. Mr. CALDER: The rates quoted are for all traffic?

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: Yes.

Hon. J. H. KING: Honourable senators, when I gave place to my honourable friend—

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: I want to thank my honourable friend for doing so.

Hon. Mr. KING:—I was under the impression that he desired to exercise a privilege peculiar to honourable senators who live near the city of Ottawa, and, with the modesty characteristic of those who come from the West, I was very glad not in any way to interfere with his enjoyment of that privilege. However, it would seem that he has been more or less carried away by his own eloquence: I think he has missed his train. But I am glad to learn that he intends to remain and support the principle of the Bill, which he says is good.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: Yes.

Hon. Mr. KING: If that is so, my retirement in his favour has been of some advantage. I think his statement should guide us in this debate. Should the principle embodied in this Bill be adopted for the advantage of the people of Canada? Experience in our own business affairs would indicate that that principle has been proved to be effective in dealing with one of our greatest transportation problems. When the Railway Commission was established the railways objected to regulation and control of rates, but, as we were informed by gentlemen who appeared before the Railway Committee, the railways ultimately acknowledged that the application of the principle had been of advantage not only to themselves, but to the people of Canada generally.

This being so, why should that principle of regulation not be applied to the other modes of transportation that have sprung up in recent years? In the days of the horse and buggy the railways had no occasion to worry about competition, but within the last twenty-five years the rapid development of truck and bus traffic has very materially affected railway transportation throughout this country. This condition is not peculiar to Canada, but is world-wide, and I do not believe any public man or anyone engaged in transportation to-day would suggest for a moment that Parliament should undertake to curb these new transportation facilities. And, indeed, that is not the object of the Bill. No one can argue convincingly that those engaged in truck and bus traffic should not be subject to some control with a view to uniformity of rates and practices not only in any province,

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but throughout the Dominion. That is the principle underlying this Bill. True, by reason of constitutional difficulties we have not been able to advance as far as we should like in the control of motor-truck and bus traffic, but we are trying to make a beginning.

I remember that in 1933 I moved a resolution in this Chamber suggesting that the Federal Government call together a committee composed of officers of the Federal Government and of the provincial governments, of the railway companies and the motor transport companies, and of others engaged in various forms of transportation. The right honourable leader opposite (Right Hon. Mr. Meighen), who was then leading this Chamber, told me he thought that a committee of the Senate might very well be formed to discuss the resolution and see if something could not be done. The then Minister of Railways stated, in another place, that the matter was being canvassed between the provincial governments and the Federal Government, and questionnaires had been sent out. Thereupon I told the right honourable gentleman that probably it would be better to let the federal Minister and the representatives of the provincial governments arrange matters, if it could be done.

At that time a similar committee was functioning in the United States. It included in its membership representatives of the Federal Government and the various state governments, the railways, the motor transportation interests and the automobile companies. That committee made a report. It was adopted by the United States Government, and to-day there is in the United States a form of control, both intrastate and federal, and that control is working to the advantage not only of the truck and bus traffic, but also of transportation facilities generally.

Such, I think, is the object of the Minister of Transport in sponsoring this Bill. He desires to apply as far as possible this broad principle of regulation. No honourable member will contend that these public transportation utilities should be allowed to run wild. My honourable friend from Salcoats (Hon. Mr. Calder) stated in our Railway Committee that we were going to correct what was formerly known as jitney competition. That is true. It is admitted that we cannot advance as far in that direction as we should like to go. Personally I should like to see the Federal Government step in and take over the provincial highways from Halifax or Sydney to Vancouver or Alberni, or Vancouver Island, and consolidate them into a national highway, and at the same time, in conjunction with the provinces, take in certain designated