

Hon. Charles Turner: Honourable senators, today I am in a charitable mood, and I wish to help out my good friend, Senator Doody, and get this bill, Bill C-105, out of the barn and on the rails—especially on the narrow gauge rails in his beloved province of Newfoundland.

Honourable senators, I wish to commend Senator Spivak for introducing Bill C-105, which, hopefully, ensures the safe operation of railways and amends certain other acts in consequence thereof.

Well, honourable senators, as far as it goes, Bill C-105 is a poor excuse for the type of legislation that the railway worker sincerely believed was in the mill. But, as my friends in the industry tell me, it is better than nothing. On Sunday I received a few phone calls and the comment I heard on the telephone was, "What else can we expect from this government?" The morale of the CNR employee is, once again, going down the tube. Three slices of bread may be better than the whole loaf at this time. This is the way the employees of the CN and CP are looking at this bill.

Mr. E.G. Abbot of the Canadian Railway Labour Association and Mr. Ron A. Bennett, the Canadian Legislative Director of the United Transportation Union, appeared before the minister and the House of Commons Transport Committee to express their general feelings on Bill C-105, the Railway Safety Bill. We all welcome the introduction of legislation which, on the surface, appears to address many of our concerns and the concerns that all railroaders have had with maintaining and improving rail safety in Canada. However, I am sorry to say that this bill will not do it. We, of course, have some concerns with respect to certain clauses of the proposed legislation, and the union officers look forward to being part of the consultative process.

● (1610)

In the meantime, we wish to congratulate the minister and the government on taking the first small step towards a safer railway industry in Canada. As members of the brotherhood—and I am still a member—we feel that the provisions of Bill C-105 represent a very small step forward for all concerned with the safe operation of the railway systems across our great country.

Honourable senators, we do not wish senators to conclude that the brotherhood does not fully recognize or appreciate the strength inherent in Bill C-105. However, it is very small and we wish there was more. We all hope that, through the consultative process and by means of constructive criticism by the railways workers through their union leaders, this safety bill can be improved even further in many ways and to the benefit of all the parties, the governments, the railways, the workers and the taxpayers who, after all, will pay the shot in future years.

Honourable senators, back in the year 1941, when I was hired on the CNR, I was sent to Toronto to write an examination on the rules during a five-day examination period. The examination lasted from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. each day. This examination was held in the rule car, and when I returned to

make my three trial trips, beginning with my first day for pay, the rule instructor, the master mechanic, the engineer, the conductor, the trainman and yardman, to my amazement, constantly impressed on each new employee that the name of the game on railroads was the word "safety." The idea was constantly expressed to me: "Don't make any mistakes in your railroad career and possibly lose an arm, a leg or perhaps your life." This was the word; this was the railroad bible.

After the depression years of the "dirty thirties", both railroads began hiring new employees, beginning in the summer of 1939. With the declaration of war by Canada on September 10, 1939, and with the gearing up of all industries in a total Canadian war effort, the railroads began to move the thousands of troops and war equipment across all the provinces of Canada. Even as each day dawned, crews on and off the jobs, and especially in the bunk houses, would discuss the problems of making their particular section of the railways a much safer place to work. Therefore, it was very easy to see that the companies and the workers had thoughts of safety uppermost in their minds. The word was: Move the troops and the war material the fastest way possible, consistent with the very magic word, "safety." We had "ship-by-rail" and safety committees which met each month. At those committees, safety was fully discussed and every employee was expected to attend.

The Canadian Railway Labour Association and the United Transportation Union have been in the forefront of promoting safety by working with the railway companies of Canada. The Canadian Railway Labour Association is comprised of 12 railway unions that collectively represent approximately 60,000 workers employed by the three major companies and a number of smaller short-line railways which operate freight or passenger trains from coast to coast in Canada. The unions represented by the Canadian Railway Labour Association are as follows:

- The United Transportation Union
- The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers
- The Canadian Signal and Communications Union
- The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees
- The Transportation and Communications Union
- The Brotherhood of Railway Carmen
- The International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers
- The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- Rail Canada Traffic Controllers
- Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Transport and General Workers
- The Sheet Metal Workers' International Association

Honourable senators, these are a great group of men doing a fantastic job day in and day out, 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

The policy direction of the Canadian Railway Labour Association is decided by the senior officers of all the aforementioned railway unions, after consultation with the various locals across Canada. The unionized railway employees subject