

The industry is an important source of employment in the Dominion. The trend in the direction of people providing their own means of transport, as in the case of the private car and truck, in preference to using the public transport services is still very strong. Air transport promises to revolutionize long-distance passenger transport and certain branches of freight transport.

Another conclusion is clear: that rapid expansion in motor and air transport may have serious and even crippling effects on the older forms, and that one of the biggest problems we have to face is a system of regulation which, while not "bolstering up" obsolescence or inefficiency, will at the same time preserve the inherent advantages of each form of transport. Free and healthy competition should be allowed to play its part in ensuring efficiency and cheapness, and the dominant consideration in any system of regulation should be the interests of the public as a whole, and not those of any particular form of transport.

Another important problem is the renewal and modernization of all forms of transport rendered necessary by the "lean" years of war. Considerable progress has already been made, but when one surveys our existing fleets of motor-vehicles, railway rolling-stock, and ships one is impressed with the huge amount of modernization and renewal that must take place before our transport system is running "full and free" again.

And now I come to my final point. Low transport costs are essential if we are to maintain our position on the overseas markets of the world and to keep down the cost of living within the Dominion. The quickest and most effective way of reducing transport costs, or offsetting increases, is to increase the rate of flow of traffic through the whole system. If we can do this the unit cost of transport must come down with beneficial effects to all classes of the community and to the prosperity of all engaged in the transport industry. I appeal to all classes of transport operators and workers to do all they reasonably can to increase the rate of flow of whatever traffic they may be concerned with.

It has been said that "the dominant economic fact of our age is the development, not of the manufacturing, but of the transport industries." It is these industries which have done by far the most towards increasing New Zealand's wealth. We cannot afford to have anything but a modern and efficient transport system if we are to fulfil the promise of our country's future and to play our rightful part in the British Commonwealth of Nations whose history has been described as a triumph of transport.

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