

and guidelines which should be adhered to in order to make available to the nation an adequate and efficient transportation network. While this Policy is cast in somewhat broad terms, there is at least one aspect of the Policy which is beyond controversy or doubt.

The type of national transportation system which the Policy seeks to bring about is one in which the several modes are dealt with fairly and equitably so that the inherent advantages of each can be realized—thus promoting an efficient and economical use of the country's transportation resources. In the words of the Policy, the objective is:

"* * * to recognize and preserve the inherent advantages of each [mode]; to promote safe, adequate, economical, and efficient service and foster sound economic conditions in transportation and among the several carriers * * *."

The question posed is whether this legislation is consistent with these objectives. A short explanation will suffice to show plainly that it is not.

Since one of the important objectives of the National Transportation Policy is to foster sound economic conditions in transportation and among the several carriers and to insure the efficient use of transportation resources, it follows that those carriers using publicly supplied transportation facilities should pay adequate charges for their use. In other words, if economic conditions are to be sound among the several carriers, each class must pay its way. If this is not to be the case, the nation's available transportation resources will be used in uneconomic and inefficient ways. Studies ordered by Congress and reports resulting therefrom show beyond question that the heavier trucks and combinations should be paying considerably more than they do now for their use of the highways.³

Since present user charges are inadequate, common sense tells us that to permit further increases in vehicle sizes and weights simply would aggravate and worsen the inequitable situation now existing. Two things are clear, namely, present user charges should be increased commensurate with existing motor vehicle sizes and weights and no increase in such sizes and weights should be permitted without further and corresponding increases in user charges.

Some might ask if this is not a matter of singular concern to the several classes of highway users, including the private automobile owners and the several other classes of users who operate smaller types of equipment. The answer must be that it is of concern to the several categories of highway users, but not alone to them. The railroads, being vigorous competitors of highway carriers, also have an important interest in the elimination of the enormous and unjustified subsidies in the form of inadequate user charges paid by the operators of the larger highway units.

It may be argued that the fixing of user charges is not a function of this Committee, but its overall responsibility cannot so easily be avoided. While this Committee may not determine the measure and level of increased or altered user charges, its obligation is clear—it should not recommend to the Congress any legislation that will materially increase the cost of highways, as will S. 2658, unless and until accompanied by wholly adequate user charges to be paid by those responsible for such costs. To do otherwise is to recommend use of our available transportation resources in uneconomic ways.⁴ Significantly, such increased cost of highways, and the resultant uneconomic and inefficient use of our transportation resources, would be for the benefit of only a small segment of total highway users. Moreover, consideration of increased highway cost and responsibility therefor cannot be confined to the Interstate System since there appears no practical way to confine such vehicles to that system. Traffic does not originate and terminate on the Interstate System.⁵

THERE SHOULD BE PROPER ASSIGNMENT OF THE COST BURDEN OCCASIONED BY SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOVERY OF SUCH COST FROM THOSE RESPONSIBLE

We should like to say something about highway safety, giving full recognition to the fact that the railroad industry is not the spokesman for what is needed to make operations on the highway safe. Also, we want to say that it isn't the desire or purpose of the railroads to secure competitive equality or competitive advantage by sponsoring safety requirements for highway users. But highway

³ Final report of the Highway Cost Allocation Study, January 6, 1961, House Document 54, 87th Congress, 1st Session.

⁴ Appendix, p. 713.

⁵ Appendix, p. 713.