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*A. Vanstegen*  
Evanston Oct. 71

# PROCEEDINGS — —

## Twelfth Annual Meeting

“Changing Times and Keeping Up”

October 18-19-20, 1971

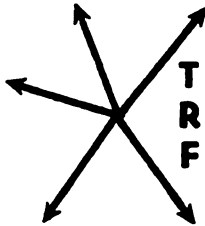
Sheraton Hotel

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



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**TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH FORUM**

# Transportation and All That

by Immo Q. Bility

**I** THINK that I shall never see  
The logic of the ICC.  
Indeed, unless their viewpoint changes  
Return we will to homes on the ranges.  
The Commission seems weak, nay even malariable.  
Why change costs "out-of-pocket" to costs that are "variable"?  
Such major decisions, make one hold one's nose  
A rose by other names, after all, still a rose.  
'Tis true that those who regulate  
Have helped create this sorry state  
In which old problems rise again,  
Not least of which is Central-Penn.

But others, too, must share the blame  
And hold their heads in abject shame.  
Not least of these to head the list  
Are those with label "Economist."  
From relevance are their concepts lost,  
Not least of which is marginal cost  
To which all freight rates should relate  
As if 'twere a potential state.  
Yea, thru the valley of turmoil 'tis tossed  
That damned, elusive marginal cost.  
But dimly, I have a premonition  
That greater weight to competition  
Should be given without delay.  
We may find something out that way.

Not blameless stand the transport firms  
Whose devious action twists and turns  
Who regularly seek protection  
To stop essential resource correction  
Who lay the blame for present condition  
On the poor, old, understaffed Commission.  
Who fail to see with eyes so clear  
That the fault may be in themselves, my dear,  
For they have failed to innovate  
To rectify the present state,  
'Tis they who've sanctioned management  
Whose ineptitude is dearly spent  
And so, economists and firms  
Have helped create this can of worms.

But governments can claim no praise  
 They too contribute to malaise.  
 'Tis they who spend the funds with glee  
 And even finance the SST  
 'Tis they who purchase goods at large  
 Without a thought for user charge.  
 Express capacity they perpetuate  
 And push into every state  
 Without a thought of ensuing mayhem—  
 They're victims of the G.T.M.\*  
 Tax and subsidy o'erall they place  
 Whose consequence they fail to face  
 Oh what a gift if God would gie us  
 For regulators to learn to free us  
 From bewildering details and contrary policies  
 Who'd rid the nation of such dreadful fallacies.

To the modes, to the modes 'tis time we turned  
 To see the results of what we've learned.  
 First, there's the rails so full of grief  
 Their problems are beyond belief.  
 But their answers seem so unrealistic  
 That the future looks most pessimistic.  
 When excess capacity widely prevails  
 Will higher rates lead goods to the rails?  
 When problems mount and they're on the verge  
 Is this the time to try to merge?  
 But despite all this, for I'm no oracle  
 The rails at least have been historical.  
 (Now they're after Federal dough  
     According to A.S.T.R.O.  
 Which seems to be written in some frustration  
 In fear of potential nationalization).

The trucks perforce can boast more piety  
 But only 'cause they've much variety.  
 Of greater wisdom they cannot boast  
 They'd pave the land from coast to coast,  
 Without a raise in user charges  
 Indeed, in this, they're like the barges.  
 The airlines too come under question  
 For scheduling to augment congestion.  
 All modes contribute to pollution  
 Defying any neat solution  
 And so we gag and cough and choke  
 Our ears benumbed, the lines go broke.

\* Grand Transportation Mystique

The modes, in short, have many problems  
But as we approach the season of goblins  
Perhaps we should cease our moans and our groans  
Those in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.  
There's much to be said for our transport system  
Here's some of the virtues; I'd like to list 'em.  
First, the abundance of shipper choice  
Provides real benefits—let us rejoice!  
Then there's . . .

*At this point the manuscript ends. Historians are unclear whether Dr. Bilty couldn't think of any other virtues or was merely called to the phone. What we do know is that this epic poem remains hauntingly incomplete—what further words of wisdom from his magic pen would have followed is forever shrouded in mystery.*

*We are, however, left with his famous aphorism, a ringing tribute to transport policy—"Immobility we trust."*