

6-7 GEORGE V, A. 1916

Q. That would only affect, as the Chairman said, the quantity of express matter you carried?—A. It affects the quantity, yes. It takes away a considerable portion of the traffic that we handled on a better basis than that which remained.

*By Mr. Chisholm (Inverness):*

Q. And that competition compels you to bring down your rates?—A. No, it has not that effect, because the rates are fixed by the Railway Commission.

Q. You say they were brought down in 1913?—A. Yes.

Q. Why did you bring them down?—A. By order of the Railway Commission. It is possible, I am not prepared to say, that we went farther in the reduction of rates than we should have gone.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Then it is not in the mind of your company at the present time to favour the carriage of fish from the Atlantic coast to inland points?—A. It is not in our minds to discourage it; on the contrary we are endeavouring to encourage all the business we can.

Q. Then your company does, as a matter of fact, desire to encourage, in so far as they can, the transportation of fish from the Atlantic coast to the interior markets of Canada?—A. We do, and we will.

Q. Would your company be prepared, in order to carry out a policy of that sort, to consider favourably the idea of giving a carload rate?—A. Not at less than the present rates.

Q. Well the present rates are less than carload rates, are they not? The present rate applies to a shipment of 500 pounds, does it not?—A. To a shipment of any size.

Q. To a shipment of any size less than a carload lot or more than a carload lot?—A. Any size.

Q. It is generally customary, is it not, to make carload lot rates?—A. On merchandise.

Q. What kind of merchandise?—A. Wherever you have anything to gain by making a lower rate.

Q. When there is any saving to be made you can make up a carload rate?—A. Not on Atlantic fish shipments—there may be a saving made, but what I say is that the rate already is lower than it ought to be even on carload shipments.

Q. But not low enough to cause a loss in carrying it?—A. We would not make a rate which would be so low as to cause a loss to the company.

Q. Do I understand that you regard the present rate as being one on which you cannot make any money in the carriage of fish from the Atlantic coast to the interior?—A. Yes.

Q. You consider that you are doing that business without making a profit on it?—A. Yes.

Q. And it may be that you are making a loss on it?—A. Possibly.

Q. Have you ever ascertained, or endeavoured to ascertain what the loss is?—A. No, I can only get at it comparatively by taking the rates on fish and comparing them with the rates under Scale "N," on farm products. On the whole business there is a loss and, as the rates on fish are lower at the present time than on merchandise the loss must be heavier on fish than on the other business.

Q. Is there a loss on your business between Montreal and the east?—A. We do not segregate the earnings by sections or divisions.

Q. You are not prepared to say then that you have experienced a loss in the last two years?—A. No.

Q. The rates in the West being less, that is in some parts of the West, for long hauls, it is possible that some of the losses experienced might be due to that?—A. I do not think the rates are less except as regards shipments of fish in carloads.

MR. W. S. STOUT.