

which every one prays may at an early date be removed by the return of peace. When that item of export disappears we shall want further items of natural products to take its place. With the natural resources which we possess, and the character of the people inhabiting the Dominion, we may be sure that production generally will continue to increase. Meanwhile, if we are to be made good to our creditors, we must continue to concentrate our efforts towards economy and production.

Enormous sums of money have been devoted by Canadian Parliaments during the past ten years and longer to facilitate the construction of rail transportation systems. We have gone the limit in the provision of assistance to railway promoters and builders. Some careful observers, whose opinions are entitled to great consideration, are of the opinion that the country has handled the transportation needs very badly, and that undue sums have been expended or wasted in the construction of parts of our railway systems, or the unnecessary duplication of systems, and they have much to support them in their views. There has undoubtedly been great waste in the building of our railway systems. I presume there will always be some waste in large construction enterprises.

The excuse, if not the reason, which is put forward in justification of the immense amounts of public moneys and credit given or loaned to the railway corporations, has been that production, particularly in the West, should be accelerated.

While subsidiary advantages have accrued to the more easterly parts of Canada in connection with the large construction programme of the past ten years or longer, still the fact remains that every resident of Canada, even in remote and inaccessible parts, has shouldered his share of the burden in providing the great transportation systems, largely for the direct anticipated benefit to the tiller of the soil. I therefore wish to take advantage of the present opportunity to bring the attention of the minister and the House to the necessity for giving the greatest attention to facilities for the prosecution of the very important fishing industry.

I am not unmindful of the assistance which has been given to that industry in the past. This assistance has, apart from tariff protection, mainly taken the form of facilitating transportation.

Notwithstanding the assistance given for shipments of fresh fish and the very large increase in the business at Montreal, the

railways have not, I am advised, given any lower rates. The rates for small shipments appear to be too high, and prevent profitable business being done by small dealers unless the consumer is charged beyond reason. With reasonable rates and proper facilities for handling, it would appear, *prima facie*, that the retailer should be able to sell at lower than current retail rates and still have a fair profit.

The hon. member for Guysborough (Mr. Sinclair) and other hon. gentlemen have at different times urged in this House that provision be made by the Government for a steamship service to carry the output of the fisheries fresh to foreign markets. The hon. member, with his extensive knowledge of business, will appreciate the desirability of this service being performed by private effort if possible. My hon. friend from Guysborough (Mr. Sinclair) will probably agree that if private initiative will establish such a service it will be apt to secure a better demonstration than if undertaken by Government.

Mr. SINCLAIR: If my hon. friend will excuse me. I did not propose that the Government should establish a line of boats as a Government line. If my hon. friend took that meaning from what I said, it is not what I intended. My idea was that they should give a substantial subsidy to enable private enterprise to put a private line of fast boats on the route between eastern Nova Scotia and the Boston and New York market. I would like to know if my hon. friend is in favour of that.

Mr. McCURDY: The arrangement to which I referred was one under which private interests should provide a steamship service with cold storage equipment, between a leading Nova Scotia fish producing port and foreign markets without any expense to the Government. No subsidy was asked for. Unfortunately, however, the war intervened and these projects have not been carried out, but I am assured that they have not been abandoned. These interests are to be congratulated on their enterprise. The experiment will, as soon as it can be undertaken, I am sure, be watched with interest, and if successful, I trust that my hon. friend may find that, in the constituency which he specially represents, as well as elsewhere, enterprising trade interests may afford the advantages of such a service to the fishing industry of the different producing districts.