

rates has not contributed at all to bettering the condition of the railways, simply because of the diminished amount of traffic offered to the roads in consequence. The lumber trade of the Maritime Provinces has been paralyzed, and our yards are full of lumber awaiting water transportation, which means that all that traffic has been lost to the railroads. The delay in transportation has also caused a great loss to the Maritime Provinces, for operations have had to be curtailed, business has slackened, railway traffic has decreased, and in consequence there has been less work to do and a growing volume of unemployment. The same condition of affairs is prevalent in the West, as is borne out by the statement of the Minister of Railways which I have just quoted. And business in central Canada has suffered proportionately. Therefore traffic has been lost to the railroads which would have amply covered the increase in wages.

We have to look to the future to see what can be done to effect an improvement, and if I can only make one suggestion which will be of value I shall consider it my duty as a representative in this Parliament to make it, not only in the interest of my constituents but in the interest of the country as a whole, for the local interest in the aggregate constitute the national interest. It is the business of the railroads not only to carry the traffic that arises in different parts of the country, but also to assist in the development of our natural resources and to make the widest possible distribution of all the products of those resources. Only by the most thorough distribution of our products and commodities east and west and north and south can trade be developed and the railroads be put in a position to earn enough to pay operating expenses. I am not alone in contending that freight rates should be reduced. This question is one which is uppermost in the minds of the people of the United States, particularly in the minds of leaders in the agricultural world. While there are differences of opinion as to the best methods of making their railroads prosperous in the future, they are of one mind when it comes to the matter of freight rates, declaring that a reduction of rates would bring about greater production and therefore more trade for the railroads. They are appealing to the President of the United States to consult with representatives of capital and of labour with a view to ascertaining the best means of bringing about a decrease in rates in order that there

may be more transportation of all products available in the United States. Only a few days ago the Legislature of New Brunswick adopted unanimously a resolution moved by the premier of the province, seconded by Mr. Baxter, leader of the Conservative party in the Legislature and supported by Mr. Fawcett, leader of the Farmer's party, complaining about the present rates and asking that the Government of the day take the necessary action through the Board of Railway Commissioners to bring about such a reduction in those rates as will enable the industries of the Maritime Provinces to send their products to the western portions of Canada.

There is one particular feature of this problem which has always occupied my mind and which I have discussed on more than one occasion in this House. I may be permitted to point out the difference between the present position of the Intercolonial Railway and that which it occupied before the Canadian National railways were instituted as a system and placed under a Board of Management. It has frequently been stated, not only in the press, but occasionally by members of this House—I even hear it said occasionally by some of our old compatriots in the province of Quebec—that the Intercolonial has been a burden upon the rest of Canada. Permit me to say, Mr. Speaker, that had it not been for the Intercolonial railway the Maritime Provinces would not have become part of the Confederation, and that without the advantage of the Maritime Provinces, particularly the advantage of their open ports, Ontario would have remained the back door of the United States. The people of the Maritime Provinces have given impetus to the trade of the country through the advantages conferred by their open ports—ports placed there, as I have often said in this House, by the hand of Providence, not merely for the benefit of the Maritime Provinces themselves, but for the benefit and advantage of the whole Dominion for all time. And how can it be said that the Intercolonial has been a burden to the rest of Canada? In the first place, it has been a barrier against the high rates which most of the railways in Ontario and Quebec would impose; it has been in a position to keep the rates down to a certain level. Moreover, Ontario and Quebec have benefited by the trade of the Maritime Provinces the greater part of which before Confederation, went to the United States by water routes. Every day for fifty years trains have been filled with their products