

Mr. MANN: They are not all that low. For instance, I have pointed to the lumber example. Let me go back to that for a minute. I have mentioned that the distance from Dalhousie, New Brunswick, to Montreal was within four miles of the central Canadian one at Val d'Or. If what you said held true, of course, our rate to Montreal should have been lower by the amount of the Maritime Freight Rates Act subsidy that applies on it. It is not so. The Maritime Freight Rates Act holds the rate down but it does not hold it down forever.

Mr. DRYSDALE: Has the Maritime Freight Rates Act developed a sacrosanct character as far as you are concerned? In other words, in this forthcoming royal commission would the attitude of the maritimes be that they would be prepared to abandon these statutory rates and perhaps have the board set a level and then decide whether a subsidy was necessary?

Mr. MANN: I would be very surprised, sir, if there would be one voice heard from east of the Levis, Diamond and Boundary that would advocate the abolition of the Maritime Freight Rates Act.

Mr. DRYSDALE: What is the viewpoint of your region with regard to the Crowsnest rates agreement? Do you think those statutory rates should be maintained?

Mr. MANN: We feel, of course, that the statutory rates system is the one great rate system that the western provinces have. So far, with all the discussion that has gone on about the grain rates we are still perhaps a long way from a complete factual analysis of it. I would refer you to the remarks made by the Turgeon commission, the royal commission on transportation, which I think said that after 10,000 man-hours expended by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company to prove the point, the conclusions were just not proper. Therefore, we cannot tell whether the Crowsnest rates are compensatory or non-compensatory and what should be done with them.

Mr. DRYSDALE: Perhaps I am taking a very naive view of the whole situation—

Some Hon. MEMBER: Agreed.

Mr. DRYSDALE: I am getting support from the farm delegation—but from an examination of the rate structure looking at it on an economical basis, it seems to me that the discussion of the Crowsnest and also the maritimes is very, very short of equitable, looking at the whole picture. I would emphasize that I am certainly not negatizing the idea of subsidy to the maritimes and also to the grain shipper, but I think we should have the rates put in on an equitable basis across Canada, and then if a subsidy is necessary, find out to what extent the subsidy is needed.

Mr. MANN: Mr. Drysdale, might I make a very clear and definite differentiation between the Crowsnest rate and the Maritime Freight Rates Act?

Mr. DRYSDALE: Yes, please.

Mr. MANN: The Crow rates are stable; they do not move. The maritime freight rates do move and have moved very rapidly. They are not inhibiting, to my knowledge, the board in the exercise of its functions. If they do, the board at least has never said so. I cannot see any way—I am subject to correction by the members of the board who are present—that the existence of the Maritime Freight Rates Act inhibits the board from discharging its proper functions in the disposition of freight rates.

The question arose briefly in the so-called 30 per cent case. We always seem to have deviations in numbers—the 30 per cent case became the 21 per cent judgment. In the 30 per cent case that question I believe, was settled once and for all.