

This is the cable received from Mr. John Marchbank, secretary of the National Union of Railway Men:

Not satisfied with existing consolidation of the British railways and advocating complete unification of all means of transport and national ownership and control.

If I were a Socialist I should be in favour of unification, because I should believe, and I think truly, that it was one step towards what I intended ultimately to achieve, that is, complete government ownership of the railways of Canada.

I sometimes doubt whether honourable members appreciate the value of our present position, with two separate railway systems in this country, one owned by the Government, the other privately owned. Each of them is a yardstick of the achievements of the other. We can measure what one does by what the other does; so we have a very valuable means of ascertaining which system is doing the better. I believe to a certain extent in the virtues of competition. There are of course all kinds of competition. I think our two railway companies could achieve a competition which is neither wasteful nor unnecessary, and that by agreement they could eliminate all that remains of waste and unnecessary services.

If the executive officers of the two railway systems would stop this childish business of making faces at each other behind our backs, they could, I think, achieve a friendly co-operation of service to the people of Canada—the real purpose for which they are here.

Honourable senators, I realize that I have probably wearied the House by my extended remarks on this subject. My only excuse is its importance and the great interest I take in it.

May I sum up what I have said?

Firstly, that the railway problem is inherent to this country.

Secondly, that railroad transportation is, and will always continue to be, essential for the country, not only because of the mere carriage of the freight of the country, but as a factor in our national unity.

Thirdly, that the burden of our railway deficits is not unduly excessive, and is not beyond the capacity of the country to bear.

Fourthly, that unification would not bring about a financial solution, and inherent dangers in it should make us very chary of adopting that policy without a full knowledge of what it implies.

For these reasons I shall vote for the majority report of the committee.

I have but one more word to add. The arduous work of the committee is now at an end, and at its conclusion I suggest that

the message of the people of Canada to their two railway systems should be this: Stop your bickerings and your propaganda. We have decided that you shall carry on as two separate entities in friendly competition and co-operation. Under the Canadian National-Canadian Pacific Act of 1933 we have provided you with the machinery necessary for that purpose. You are jointly charged with the vitally important task of providing our country with adequate railway facilities with as little unnecessary waste and duplication as possible. Get on with the job!

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: Will the honourable senator allow me a moment? Does he not think that the passage of the Act compensating railway employees who may be laid off as a result of co-operation will go a long way towards checking or possibly stopping altogether any further voluntary co-operation? I am sure my honourable friend read the views of the various unions in the United States and Canada which I quoted. They stressed the point that if what was proposed under that Bill could be accomplished it would go a long way towards stopping voluntary co-operation.

Hon. Mr. HUGESSEN: I was very much interested in, and quite appreciated, the remarks of my honourable friend on that topic. Of course that argument would apply equally to unification. But Sir Edward Beatty did not seem to think that was an insuperable obstacle in the way of ultimately achieving, through unification, the savings he mentioned.

Hon. J. H. RAINVILLE: Honourable senators, I have been listening with increasing interest to the addresses delivered in this Chamber on the ever-present problem of Canada's railways. Although not a member of the special committee on this subject, I attended most of its sittings and listened to practically all the evidence that was given before it. I have also read many newspaper reports of speeches made outside of this House.

One of the last opinions publicly expressed was that which was voiced in unmistakable terms by the member of the House of Commons for the Yukon, Mrs. George Black, before the Women's Conservative Association of Montreal. She said:

The time is coming when politicians will have to take that nettle in both hands. . . . Those railways have got to be amalgamated.

This is an opinion that might be open to debate. It commits the speaker directly to one of several solutions offered by different interests, a solution which was ably expounded