

6-7 GEORGE V, A. 1916

Q. There is a difference in the price?—A. Oh, yes. The dealers will sometimes order some by freight and some by express. The difference is ordinarily one-half cent, or three-quarters of a cent, per pound higher when shipment is desired by express; and the dealer may order some by express and some by freight, because the Saturday shipment by express will deliver the fish to him for Monday morning. The train gets in Sunday night. By freight he would not be expecting to get delivery before Wednesday morning, so that there is a difference in the cost. It is the difference in the charges.

Q. Has there ever been any attempt at co-operation between the different fish dealers, say in Montreal, Toronto or elsewhere, whereby they would consolidate their orders and so get carload lot rates?—A. There has been a successful attempt to bring dealers closer together through the medium of our Canadian Fisheries' Association, but there has been no attempt to get them anywhere so closely together as to put their shipments all together, because that would be eliminating competition, and we might get in wrong, it might be regarded as restraint of trade.

Q. I do not mean exactly consolidate their shipments and have them all addressed to the same man, but to have their shipments come forward in the same car?—A. Well, that has been done through the medium of the means afforded by the Naval Service Department. The fish is shipped, it comes forward in the same car; a refrigerator car is provided; our shipments and other dealers' shipments come along in that same car. If we have the same quantity leaving the shipping point on the same day, if we have a sufficient quantity, then we obtain what is called the carload rate. If we have not a sufficient quantity to make up the 24,000 pounds, we must pay the lower classification, a higher rate.

Q. Do the dealers consider it of advantage to themselves to co-operate in that way, or would they rather "go it alone." When they co-operate they understand that all the dealers in their city are going to be supplied at the same moment as themselves. If they go it alone they are one of the few firms to have fish on hand?—A. The shipments are forwarded about the same time, Mr. Chairman, and at the same points; and while it has happened occasionally that one dealer's shipment would be in ahead of another ordinarily the shipments arrive at the same time.

Q. Supposing that two or three dealers in Montreal order fish, the quantity being less than carload lots, and those orders are consolidated in the one car. Do you get a rate which is a carload lot rate if the total amounts to a carload, or do you each have to pay individually less than carload lot rates?—A. We have to pay less than carload rates.

Q. Do you consider that that is fair?—A. The railways claim that to obtain carload rate it must be one shipper, one bill of lading, one consignee. I believe that that is right to a certain extent. I have had some difficulty with the railway companies because of a difference of opinion between the officials and myself over getting carload rates, when we were shipping quantities sufficient to make up minimum car lots, and it led to a lot of controversy. What I do object to is, at a time when we are all desirous—the Government is desirous—of developing our Canadian industries, of which the Canadian fisheries is one of the most important, and while a department of the Government, the Naval Service Department, is doing splendid work and has done good work to help in the development in a practical manner, by helping on the charges, by providing better facilities—on the other hand at the same time the Railway Department of the Government should undertake—I might almost call it to place obstacles in the way of the development of that industry; and I know whereof I speak. We have had in the last six months, without any warning, or without any reason that we know of, the minimum weights for carloads of fish on a different classification raised on fresh fish from 20,000 to 24,000 pounds, and on smoked fish, such as finnan haddies, a perishable fish, from 24,000 to 30,000 pounds, in order to obtain the carload rate. There is no reason for it except that it makes it very difficult to handle.

D. J. BYRNE.