

party of my hon. friend. I am not responsible for conditions under the Union government. These conditions were such, however, that there was some excuse for a delay in the completion of the railway but now, after all the promises that have been made by the Liberals, surely the time has come when they should endeavour to fulfil honestly and honourably some of their pledges. I think even my hon. and smiling friend the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) will agree that seldom if ever have the Liberal party fulfilled any pledge in regard to the construction of railways in this country. I think it would be very difficult for any hon. member to mention one such pledge properly kept.

However, that is aside from the question and I am not going to introduce anything of that kind into this discussion. As I have already said, the people of the prairie provinces will undoubtedly be very much disappointed, primarily because they look to that route as their natural outlet. The interference with freight rates in the west, which has added to the cost of their transportation, has disappointed them very much. These increases were effected by hon. gentlemen opposite; they have been complained of strongly, and have been the means of urging the claim of the west for the completion of this route. As a representative of the province of Manitoba and western Canada it is my duty to urge in this House by every means within my power such assistance as will tend towards the completion of that undertaking in order that these conditions may be relieved.

I have found since I came to this House that there is a very wrong impression existing in the minds of many members of this parliament in respect to western Canada. First of all, some members think that we are a spoon-fed lot out in western Canada. I would say to my friends in this House that the people of western Canada have been a long-suffering people in the matter of freight rates and transportation costs, which have borne very heavily upon them. We have in the prairie provinces more miles of railway than there are in all the rest of Canada. Further, the net earnings of those miles of railway in western Canada represent greater net earnings by \$1,000 per mile than do the railways in eastern Canada. I have some figures here, Mr. Chairman, that go to show the correctness of that statement, and it is not to be wondered at, in view of this fact, that we in western Canada claim that we have a condition in that portion of the country which requires some consideration at the hands of this parliament and at the hands of eastern Canada. We can never hope to

grow and prosper save and except as we get better transportation costs. I should like to give a few figures to the committee to make clear how we are discriminated against in western Canada in respect to freight rates.

Take the article of lumber, for instance, which is an item of great interest to the people. Let us compare the freight rate on a shipment of lumber between two points in western Canada and the rate for a similar distance between two points in eastern Canada—and I give these figures only for the purpose of bringing home to your minds the conditions as they exist in western Canada in this connection. Suppose a farmer or any other person wishes to ship a car of lumber from Megantic, Quebec, to Toronto, a distance of 503 miles. He has to pay a rate of 20½ cents per 100 pounds. Now supposing a man in Golden, British Columbia is shipping a car load of lumber to Waldeck in Saskatchewan, a distance of 506 miles. He has to pay a rate of 35½ cents per 100 pounds, or 73 per cent more than the rate the man in Toronto has to pay for a similar distance. The same thing applies if you take a shipment from Megantic, Quebec, to Ingersoll, Ontario, a distance of 596 miles, and compare the rate on that shipment with the rate from Golden, British Columbia to Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, a distance of 606 miles, or 10 miles more. The farmer in Saskatchewan has to pay 80 per cent more in freight rates on the shipment of that car of lumber than does the farmer at Ingersoll for a shipment over a slightly less distance. Take a shipment from St. John, New Brunswick, to Hamilton, Ontario, a distance of 850 miles, and compare the rate paid there with a shipment from Vancouver to Walsh, Alberta, a distance also of 850 miles. The farmer in Alberta has to pay 83 per cent more freight rates on that shipment than does the man living in Hamilton.

I place these figures before the committee in order that hon. members who do not understand conditions in western Canada as well as they should be expected to understand them will be careful before they make statements in regard to the conditions under which the people of western Canada have been suffering in the matter of transportation costs for a very long time.

Mr. MACLEAN (York): Is there a difference in the operating expenses of the railways in the different parts of Canada mentioned, and if there is a difference, can it be justified?

Mr. ROGERS: I think the expense of transportation in western Canada is no higher to the railways than in eastern Canada.