

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: —and spend his winter in California, after selling his wheat at \$2 a bushel.

Hon. Mr. SHARPE: That is not true at all.

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: No.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: My honourable friends of the West should try sometimes to understand the feelings of the East. Think of the thousands of people of small income who took what little money they had, the savings from long years of hard work, and bought a few shares in railways or in transportation companies. Now they find their investments are going up in smoke.

I will come back to my proposition. On the one side there is regulation, and on the other side the system of the survival of the fittest, under which dog eats dog. Do we want to have a continuance of the waste that has gone on in the past, or shall we do in Canada what has been done elsewhere in the world, that is, prevent excessively low rates as well as excessively high rates?

But, honourable senators, let us get a little bit closer to home. What about our railways? We are all in the railway business.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: Some people say this Bill would hardly affect the railways, so far as wheat is concerned. What about package freight? Does anyone contend that is not a very large item in railway transportation? Would it not be wise for Parliament to give some support to our own Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific Railway, both of which roads have been suffering financially for years? My honourable friends from the West say that this Bill would mean nothing but an increased schedule of rates. I deny that. What the railways ask for is a fair tribunal and nothing else. They ask that we apply to them what has been the rule in other intelligent nations. They ask us to do here what is being done in the United States. A bill similar to the one now before us has been given second reading in the American Congress.

Our own railways have been regulated for twenty-five or thirty years, but all transportation agencies competing against them have been free. Is that fair? Why not, within the ambit of this Bill, treat everyone in the same way, subject all to the same regulation? Would that not be fair, and wise also? How can we manage to lift our railways from the position in which they now lie unless we bestir ourselves in some way?

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN.

Our friends from the West seem to be afraid of the Board of Transport Commissioners, as the Railway Board will be known if the Bill is passed. This will be my last point, and I shall not be long on it.

Hon. Mr. KING: You have missed your train now. Go on.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: Well, if I have missed my train I suppose I may as well inflict myself upon the House for five minutes more.

Hon. Mr. SHARPE: I think you still have time to catch the train.

Hon. Mr. LACASSE: Another transportation problem!

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: I do not want my honourable friends from the West to think I have any grudge against them, but it seems to me that an argument in favour of the principle of this Bill should be addressed to them. Let us look at the position of the poor grain-growers. Under this Bill we are asking them to accept, not higher rates, but a tribunal which will judge as to whether certain rates can be put into effect. The grain-growers should be reminded of this fact. Their grain which goes to Europe is carried 4,800 miles. For 3,600 miles of that distance the transportation rates are regulated. It may be that all grain-growers do not know this; that some of them would be very much surprised to learn it. There are only 1,200 miles of that transportation free of control, and all we are asking our Western producers to do is to agree to have regulated rates apply to those 1,200 miles just as they already do to three-quarters of the whole distance. All we are asking is that the people of the West submit to a fair and intelligent tribunal for the regulation of rates.

But some people from the West will tell me, "We do not want to run that risk, because if we do the rates will undoubtedly be raised." Those who talk that way may not have reflected that they are making a serious admission. It is as though they said that nothing can be done to right existing rates except to raise them. According to that reasoning the rates are too low.

What tribunal will decide as to the rates? It will be the Transport Board, the body now known as the Railway Board. What has the Railway Board done for grain-growers in the past? That is a fair question. The Railway Board has been in existence for at least twenty-five years, I believe. What has it done for the people of the West? Have they any right to complain?

Hon. Mr. MULLINS: Yes.