

Supply—Transport

the increases in freight rates that were given have all been taken up by the payment of higher wages to the brotherhood of railway workers. Is the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggan opposed to those increases in wages to the brotherhood of railway workers?

Mr. Chevrier: That is the point.

Mr. McCusker: I am sorry the hon. member is not here to answer that question. Is that what he was supporting when he spoke in favour of the amendment moved by the leader of the opposition? He is rather inconsistent on that point. I should like to comment on the attitude taken this morning by the leader of the opposition, who has a friendly habit of giving the supporters of the government a lecture on their responsibilities as members and on the duty they owe to their constituents. I have no doubt that he finds these lectures useful and perhaps necessary as far as his own followers are concerned, but I assure him that we new members are fully aware of our responsibilities and we are accustomed to fulfilling our duties.

The leader of the opposition asks us to support his amendment and he says that this government has done nothing. Surely he realizes that every freight rate act was brought in by a Liberal government? Surely he realizes that if it had not been for a Liberal government we would have lost our Crowsnest pass rates? The appointment of royal commissions and everything else has been the work of Liberal governments. I simply wanted to state my reasons why I could not support the amendment, and I hope I have stated them clearly so that my friends may understand.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, I have listened with interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Regina City with regard to the freight rates situation and his reply to the leader of the opposition; but he did not discuss the point that this increase will accentuate the discrimination. Nothing has been said by any previous speaker supporting the government as to the removal of discrimination in the freight rate structure. As I listened to the minister speak I began to realize that there was no hope for western Canada and the maritime provinces at all for relief against the increase in discrimination against these areas brought about by continuing horizontal increases in railway freight rates. When the hon. member for Regina City dealt with this question and went back into the history of the Crowsnest rates instead of dealing with the resolution now before the house, I could only conclude that no member from the province of Saskatchewan or the other western provinces can

deny the grave injustice that is being intensified by reason of allowing this further increase in railway rates. It is in no way a question whether the railways should be able to finance and return a profit. All of us believe that there must necessarily be an increase in railway rates in order to meet increased costs of operation, wages and the like, provided that the companies are able to establish the necessity for such increases.

What we from the prairie provinces object to—and this applies to the maritimes as well—is that the freight rate discrimination against the economies of two sections of Canada is being perpetuated and the unfair discriminatory rates that have continued over the years are being added to. By 1922 the normal level of freight rates in the western provinces was 15 per cent above that of Ontario and Quebec. So far as the Crowsnest rates are concerned, I join with the hon. member for Regina City, as I have done on many occasions in this house, in urging the maintenance of those rates. There is no question about that so far as members from any of the western provinces are concerned, regardless of political considerations. That is old straw. All are in favour of those rates and intend to press that they are maintained. No matter what political party one belongs to, if from western Canada you support those rates. I am surprised that the hon. member for Regina City did not raise his voice against the injustice of this increase coming as it does on top of the increase in March.

Mr. McCusker: On a question of privilege, I raised my voice against it. I clearly stated that I called upon the government to prevent this injustice taking place.

Mr. Diefenbaker: All right. Now that we have the voice let us also have the vote to support the voice.

Mr. McCusker: On another question of privilege, the vote will follow the voice—

Mr. Diefenbaker: All right.

Mr. McCusker: —but I will interpret it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, in effect he says, I shall do evil and call it good.

Mr. McCusker: The hon. member usually does.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Of course that is no reply.

Mr. Chevrier: Nobody knows that better than the hon. member.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am going to call as my witness the Saskatchewan Liberal party and a resolution that they supported in the provincial legislature a few weeks ago. I