

Mr. STEWART: Those are all the questions I wanted to ask.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. MacEwan.

Mr. MACEWAN: I want to ask Mr. Cooper, now that Mr. Stewart has gone into the matter of the cases which have been decided and so on, if the Maritime Transportation Commission, having regard to what the Prime Minister said in October, believes that this special examination should take the form of a royal commission inquiry into the matters concerning maritime freight rates?

Mr. COOPER: The commission has no settled views on it. Certainly we are not inflexible on the subject of the form, whether it should be a royal commission or a special study. We are prepared naturally to give every possible co-operation to the form of inquiry which is set up. If it were done by way of a special study, I think it would be safe to say that certainly we would have no objection to that course being pursued.

If, on the other hand, it were found that a royal commission was a better vehicle for this purpose, we would likewise give naturally every co-operation to such a commission, and we would be satisfied with that form of inquiry.

Mr. MACEWAN: If a special inquiry were carried out, what would you envisage to be the necessary bodies to take part in it? I suppose it would include the board of transport commissioners, and so on?

Mr. COOPER: We would expect, if a special commission were established, that we would certainly be given every opportunity to make our views known to those engaged in making the study, and we would expect also that the person or persons conducting the study would consult the people interested in the Atlantic provinces who are concerned with the transportation picture in that area.

Mr. DICKSON: The only addition I would like to make to that is that the form is not as important as what it is going to do. As we said, its primary effect must be the restoration in this competitive area of the national policy respecting transportation in the Atlantic provinces, and we feel this must be its primary objective. The form it might take is only secondary.

Mr. MACEWAN: It is your conclusion that the rates now in effect under the Freight Rates Reduction Act should be maintained in the Atlantic province rates. I take it that it could be said that if this is done, and if Bill No. C-120 or whatever comes from it should go before the house and be passed, that that bill, once passed, would come into effect and would begin to work throughout the country. Perhaps this would give your own commission, and the provincial governments and so on a good opportunity to assess what the effect has been on other parts of Canada. In that way we can meet the competitor, and know just how it will affect the maritime provinces.

Mr. COOPER: That is quite right; we would agree with that entirely.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Hahn.

Mr. HAHN: Madam Chairman, I would like to get a little information if I can about the Maritime Freight Rates Act. Since I come from central Canada I am not familiar with that act. I gather that section 7 would prohibit the railways from making a rate outside of select territory which was so low as to destroy the advantage that exists within the select territory. Is that correct?

Mr. COOPER: It is the indication of section 7, as we see it, that the relative advantage of the person in select territory or of the shipper, is to be preserved with the result that if the rates were lowered outside the select territory, corresponding reductions would be made in the select territory to maintain the relationship.

Mr. HAHN: Did the act set out the relationship from within and outside the territory?