

Transportation

rates down from 24 to 20 cents per hundredweight, that is 4 cents lower than government subsidies. That is inadmissible and contrary to common sense. Who is going to make up for the difference? Well, as you already say, it is the one who pays taxes on his profits so that, in addition, the C.N.R.'s deficit of \$60 million may be accounted for.

Mr. Speaker, I could quote more of these instances where not only did the C.N.R. not make use of its subsidies to maintain its rates, but rather used them to bring them down even to a lower level than those ordinarily charged by other transport firms or other transport media. That, Mr. Speaker, is how the C.N.R. and the C.P.R. have operated.

I have here another letter from a company of St. Germain de Grantham in which complaints are voiced over the same procedures. I also have another letter coming from a transport firm in Thetford Mines, in the county of Mégantic, in which similar complaints are made, a Levis firm in Levis County, in which railway companies are being criticized along the same line; a Richmond firm, in Richmond County, in which criticism is voiced over the same procedures; another transport firm in Rouyn, Abitibi, says:

I do not approve of the government letting the railways indulge in disloyal competition with the trucking industry.

Another company on the north shore; and there are representatives of all those companies who will also have to protest.

From Seven Islands, we hear among other things:

—huge problems which the trucking industry must face in view of disloyal competition on the part of national railways.

And I have a dozen of these which I could quote, Mr. Speaker, and in each case mention is made of the national railways using federal government subsidies not to maintain their rates at the specified level but to bring them down, and I have examples here, where the rates were brought down to a level lower than prices in force with the trucking associations and truckers in the province of Quebec.

• (10:20 p.m.)

The examples that I give you come from Quebec. And how do you want the trucking industry in Quebec, employing thousands of Quebec citizens, to develop if a company directed by Ottawa uses taxpayers' money for unfair competition, to set prices inferior to cost prices, prices inferior to competing companies and plunge those transport companies into disquiet and lead them to ruin.

Mr. Speaker, I say this: A crown company has no right to use the taxpayers' money to lead to ruin companies formed by citizens in Quebec and elsewhere, prevent them from living and operating. Because when those transport companies are prevented from living, Mr. Speaker, that means that thousands of Quebec citizens lose their jobs, because the Canadian National uses its taxes to lower its rates illogically and unfairly.

Mr. Speaker, this is a striking example of dissatisfaction which exists now in Quebec toward Ottawa. Here is a whole class of society going into the transport trade, working hard to organize a transport company, which is now driven to ruin and bankruptcy because a crown corporation, an Ottawa company reduces its rates in an effort to deprive it of its commercial operations.

And you think, Mr. Speaker, that the transport companies in Quebec, which are numerous and which employ thousands, I repeat it, of employees, are satisfied with the conditions inflicted upon them by Ottawa?

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport, (Mr. Pickersgill) should take those remarks into consideration and realize that if the investigation is made seriously, the Canadian National during recent years, and the Canadian Pacific also used subsidies they received, not to maintain rates but to lower them, which is very serious, as I mentioned a while ago, from 57 cents to 29 cents. That is less than half the rates of the trucking industry. And after that, they complain that there is dissatisfaction. Well, that is one reason for dissatisfaction when private enterprise is taxed, so as to ruin its business.

Mr. Speaker, let the Minister of Transport investigate that and he will realize that this is a crown company which uses a power given by the federal government to dissatisfy a whole class of the population.

How can Quebec economy develop if Ottawa uses taxpayers' money to ruin industry in Quebec? How can Quebec have industries, develop its natural resources, if Quebec taxes are used to lead industries of Quebec to bankruptcy or ruin like the Canadian National is now doing?

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a source of dissatisfaction. I know there is discontent in the province of Quebec over the doings of this crown corporation in this field. It is time to put an end to this. It is time to put an end to such unfair competition and all citizens should be allowed to face competition