

So far as I personally am concerned—I am speaking frankly—I believe in control of rates and I do hope that some scheme will be worked out whereby the shipping situation on the Great Lakes can be greatly improved. I have to admit that I do not know how that can be done. That is not my business. But my view is, without any reservation, that the Government would be well advised, even in its own interest, not to press this matter at present. I do not say the idea behind the Bill should be dropped, but I repeat that we in this Chamber have not had before us the necessary facts to enable us to pass proper judgment on what should be done with regard to the two features that are left for us to consider, the control of shipping on the Lakes and the provisions respecting agreed charges.

I do not like to oppose the Bill. I should be glad if the other House could have an opportunity of analysing it, but I fear there would not be time for it to do that if the session must end early enough to permit our parliamentary representatives to reach England in time for the Coronation. It seems to me that the wisest course for the Government to pursue, in the circumstances, is just to let the measure stand over for a while. In the meantime we could digest it more fully and the Minister and his associates would be able to give further consideration to the proposals that are being made. What is the situation just now? My honourable friend from Kootenay East (Hon. Mr. King) intimated there was some support for this Bill. Where does it come from? From half a dozen or ten or one hundred persons perhaps?

Hon. Mr. KING: Many more. It has the support of public opinion.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: We have had no evidence of that, but we have had a superabundance of evidence that there is no real public support for the Bill.

Hon. Mr. KING: It is opposed by those who are uncontrolled to-day and want to remain uncontrolled.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: Do you mean to say that merchants in Montreal, Winnipeg, Toronto and other cities, and boards of trade, representing all classes of people in business who would be affected by higher package freight rates—

Hon. Mr. KING: That is not proven.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: That is what they say and fear. Do you mean to say all these are not opposed to the Bill? We can take it

for granted that the whole merchant class, and in turn the consuming class, are opposed to the Bill.

Hon. Mr. GORDON: What about the provinces, too?

Hon. Mr. CALDER: So far as the people of Western Canada are concerned I have only to refer to the attitude of Mr. Dafoe. I have been acquainted with him for thirty-five or forty years and I know him intimately. He is an outstanding Westerner, a man of high character and integrity, one who has exceptionally good knowledge of Western public opinion. When John Dafoe says the people of the West are absolutely and totally opposed to this Bill, I cannot help believing he knows what he is talking about. I repeat that our Railway Committee had no evidence of any material public opinion in favour of the measure. Yet we are asked to pass it. That is not fair to us nor to Parliament nor to the public. I do hope the Government will reconsider the situation. In view of the short time that remains before prorogation, I am convinced it would be wise to hold the measure back for further consideration.

Hon. A. MARCOTTE: Honourable senators, I will not take up much time. I may say that I had prepared a considerable argument with a view to showing that Western farmers had every reason to believe they were going to be injured once more, but owing to admissions made by the honourable senator from Montarville (Hon. Mr. Beaubien) and the honourable senator from Kootenay East (Hon. Mr. King) I think it is not necessary for me to present the whole of my argument. They conceded that the effect of the measure would be to increase freight rates on the Lakes. That is where the farmers are concerned. In order to place on Hansard some reasons for our fears I am going to read part of a letter which was read before the Railway Committee and appears at page 40 of the proceedings. The letter is signed by George S. Mathieson, Secretary of the Shippers and Exporters Committee of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. It says:

Lake transportation has been developed over a long period of time under a competitive system based on supply and demand conditions. Rates have been dependent in a large measure on the supply of grain available for transport, on the character of the freight, on the possibility of return cargoes, on the time required to complete loading, transport and discharge, on the period of the year and climatic conditions, and on the size, character and quantity of the tonnage available. Rates are also dependent on international competitive conditions on the lakes, such as movement of grain from Canadian ports to American ports for