

It goes on to say:

The critical national importance of these problems emphasizes the value of the work now being undertaken by the institute of public affairs at Dalhousie university.

People will say: Why not help yourselves? Well, the people are endeavouring to help themselves, and the institute of public affairs at Dalhousie university has undertaken an investigation into some of the reasons why these difficulties are coming upon us.

I should like to refer to the question of freight rates. We know that the board of transport commissioners are sitting at the present time and discussing the question whether freight rates should be increased. Nothing is more vital, I should say, to the maritime provinces than the freight rate structure, because we have to buy our goods from Ontario and Quebec, and the cost of freight is added to the cost of those goods. We have to pay the freight on the article as well as the price of the article when it arrives in the maritime provinces. On the other hand, when we sell to Ontario and Quebec we again have to absorb the freight rate so that we get it both going and coming. Any increase in the freight rate structure—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. I believe that a ruling was made previously that a discussion of freight rates at this time is not in order, as the matter is at present before the board of transport commissioners.

Mr. BROOKS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have nothing further to say on that subject.

A few days ago I mentioned the marshlands of the maritime provinces. I had hoped that when the Minister of Agriculture spoke this afternoon, he would mention some definite policy with regard to these marshlands. The hon. member for Cumberland has spoken many times on this question, as have other members from the maritime provinces. I have never heard a member from the maritime provinces on any side of the house object to the millions of dollars which we have been spending for the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. We have always felt that it was needed, that it was a good idea, and that we should back it. We are now asking that money be spent on our marshlands, of which there are estimated to be about 100,000 acres; and I can tell this house that this land is as rich as any to be found anywhere in Canada. I have none of these marshlands in my own constituency, but a few years ago I had the opportunity of seeing them at Windsor, Nova Scotia, where I was in charge of a military camp, which I might add was built on the marshlands. While I do not wish to digress, at that

time it was felt that this was a peculiar place to build a military camp costing \$4,000,000. The land was below sea level, and I remember that one night during a terrific storm the dikes broke and the bay of Fundy wandered at will over the camp, particularly around the hospital, which was built in the very lowest part. It cost nearly \$30,000 to repair the damage done at that time. The farmers cannot afford to lay out \$30,000 to repair dikes, so this is a problem not for the farmers of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick but for the government of Canada, the different provincial governments and the municipal organizations. I hope that some time soon the minister will make a pronouncement on the policy of the government in connection with these marshlands.

A few days ago, speaking to the house about lumber, I mentioned that we should have a larger quota for lumber from the maritimes, and said that our birch was being destroyed by dieback, a plant disease. I said then we were likely to lose a billion feet of lumber, which would also mean a great loss in wages, and that in five years' time this lumber would be a total loss. At that time I asked the minister if he would increase the quota on birch and hardwood for the maritimes in order that this large amount of lumber would not be lost. In reply the minister said:

That is true. We were asked to set a free quota for infested birch. The difficulty is that the lumber from infested birch is exactly like the lumber from good birch, and the result would have been that all the hardwood cut in the maritime provinces would have been infested birch by the time it came on the market.

In other words the minister suggested that the people of the maritime provinces were so dishonest that if given permission to cut and export infested birch they could not be trusted to do so. I make another appeal to the minister to reconsider the matter, because, as I pointed out previously, in a short time this lumber will be a total loss. Not only shall we lose some millions of dollars from the sale of the lumber; we shall lose employment for many hundreds of men, and that is something our provinces cannot afford.

There are many other matters I should like to mention, but I see my time is pretty well gone. We have recommended that the Chignecto canal be constructed. I need not take time now to point out what a great advantage this would be to our provinces from the point of view of trade. We have recommended that we be given a larger lumber quota. We have recommended that the government assist us in connection with the marshlands.