

THE RAILWAY ISSUE IN ITS RELATION TO THE MARITIME PROVINCES

At a Mass Meeting of the Citizens of Moncton, Held on Friday, February 28th, Under the Auspices of the Board of Trade, Moncton, N. B., the Following Resolutions Were Unanimously Adopted:

The following resolution was moved, by Mr. M. Lodge and seconded by Capt. J. E. Masters:

That this gathering of residents of the City of Moncton, New Brunswick, called together and in mass meeting assembled, does hereby express its grave concern and growing misgivings, respecting certain recent developments of the Canadian National Railway policy and especially so, in its prejudicial relation to the industrial, commercial and general interests of the Atlantic provinces, both littoral and hinterland; and

WHEREAS, The Atlantic seaboard and St. Lawrence waterfronts, with their splendid harbors, great possibilities of navigable deep water facilities, are a natural and needed complement essential to a successful Canadian Confederation; because in both winter and summer inland Canada is now connected by rail routes to the only great Canadian harbors open on the Atlantic coast all the year round, which harbors are nearer the British Isles than any port south of our frontier, and

WHEREAS, The Atlantic seaboard War now so happily crowned by the triumph of British and Canadian and Allied arms, taught us during the winter months of the first years when anxiety dogged our hours, how inestimable was the advantage linked with those all-Canadian railways and ports, free from any abrogation of bonding privileges, perilous to British and Canadian interests; we regard with misgivings any possible weakening of the imperial value of these railways and ports; and

WHEREAS, Any policy diverting rail traffic to any port not Canadian on these eastern shores, would inevitably, by either lessening or preventing the expansion of rail traffic flowing into such Canadian ports, tend towards starving these railways and ports, to no longer warrant the necessary expenditure for their maintenance and further development, thereby impairing the assurance of future general prosperity here in the Eastern littoral; and

WHEREAS, The Dominion Government by order-in-council amalgamated the Transcontinental and the Canadian Northern under the style of the Canadian Government Railway, and by a further order-in-council changed the name of the same to that of the Canadian National Railway, placing it virtually under the direction of Canadian Northern Railway officials, and that so far as observable their policy is to dismantle the latter to executive control of the Intercolonial Railway in the Maritime Provinces and transfer the same to Central Canadian Cities; and

WHEREAS, by the British North America Act, the construction of the Intercolonial Railway was proposed and carried into effect as part and parcel of the compact of Confederation entered into by Canada with the Maritime Provinces, thereby minimizing hostility against Confederation, and inasmuch as such present merging of the Intercolonial Railway into the Canadian National as developed by the present directors means its extinction as an integral unit, with general headquarters located in the Maritime Provinces, is a breach in spirit of the compact of Confederation and bears in its train, if persisted in, certain dissatisfaction, impairing the unity and success of Confederation, and

WHEREAS, The present C. N. R. Management has within the past few weeks transferred from the Maritime Provinces to Central Canadian Cities the principal executive heads of the I. C. R., and many of their staffs, and that orders have been issued for further transfers, which orders virtually mean dismantling the I. C. R. Management in the Maritime Provinces;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That this mass meeting views with alarm such a flagrant violation of the spirit of the compact of Confederation and opposes it as un-British because it violates the spirit of a pledge, forming a basis for Confederation.

THEREFORE, We petition the Government of Canada to take such immediate steps as will restore the Intercolonial Railway to its former position with its general executive and other headquarters in the Maritime Provinces, forming an integral unit in any contemplated ocean to ocean system of railways, thus keeping the truth of Confederation and that the other sections be made equally integral units with their own headquarters and that the National Railway central offices shall only be co-ordinating and not substituting for the existing general headquarters; and further petition not only that further transfers from the Maritime Provinces of I. C. R. Executive and subordinate officers cease, but those already transferred be restored or their numbers and importance equalled; and still further, that on the ground of public convenience, the Executive for the I. C. R. section shall continue to be as heretofore located in the Maritime Provinces.

Hon. C. W. Robinson moved the following resolution, seconded by Agent-General F. W. Sumner:—

WHEREAS, The Railway programme of the Dominion Government as evidenced by recent order in council and by the various succeeding steps which have already been taken involves the building of organizations and the adoption of policies which must inevitably have a tremendous influence upon our future;

AND WHEREAS, The City of Moncton has unquestionably occupied a prominent position as the chief Government Railway centre in Canada since the days of confederation it seems but fitting and in fact a duty that our citizens should place themselves on record and define for the benefit of the Government and all others interested, their position and say something of their aspirations and ambitions as to the future of railway development and operation.

We do not approach the matter in any spirit of criticism and we recognize the complexity of the problems with which our country and its Government have to deal.

We can only speak in terms of praise and appreciation of the work of our former General Manager, Mr. Hayes, and his organization, and we feel that in Mr. Brady the Government has a competent and faithful manager whose work is no where more properly estimated at its true value than among our railway employees and citizens.

What we wish to emphasize more particularly is the rights of our own section of Canada and our own entering city.

We believe that the future success of the great railway system now operated by the Government Board will be best served and the country's interest in this time of reconstruction properly guarded by the prompt carrying out of the programme of betterment, which was the avowed policy of the former management such as the double tracking of the main line from Saint John to Halifax, largely increased shop accommodation at Moncton and in other ways.

We feel that Moncton's Railway development and the work done by our city in civic improvement and in making this particular locality the central railway point of the Maritime Provinces should not in any way be interfered with and that anything which tends to destroy the efficiency of this organization is not in the interest of either our own city or the Maritime Provinces, nor can it result in anything but trouble and harm for the whole of Canada. Rather we have the confidence that our interest is interwoven with and has become part and parcel of the future success of this organization and we take this opportunity of conveying our views not with any desire to make mischief, but if possible to strengthen the hands of those in authority and we trust this memorial may serve a useful purpose and be received as it is offered in a narrow, parochial spirit but as founded upon truly broad and patriotic lines and as the unanimous opinion of the citizens of Moncton as expressed in a meeting called for the express purpose of deliberating upon the question.

Halifax, Mar. 4.—The labor conference now in session here has adopted a strong resolution, with reference to the Florence colliery dispute, calling upon the commissioner of works and mines to take such action as will immediately enable the largest amount of coal being taken from the colliery and should be related and willing to provide a remedy.

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HOCKEN'S CHARGES CAUSE ACTION

Ottawa Statesmen Delving Deeply Into Affairs of Civil Service Commission.

Ottawa, March 4.—Charges made by Mr. Hocken in the House against the civil service commission were under discussion this morning at a conference between Hon. A. K. MacLean, minister in charge of civil service matters, and members of the commission, accompanied by the secretary, William Foran. Later, it is understood, the charges, with the viewpoint thereon of the commissioners, were taken up at a meeting of the cabinet council.

Mr. Hocken's charges that appointments have been made by the civil service commission out of friendship rather than fitness have aroused the keenest interest among members of the service, and there is an evident desire that the charges should be fully investigated.

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