

of 5 mills per ton mile. Now, that has some very peculiar results because in some cases our cost may be below that figure, but we still get the 5 mills per ton. But when our costs tend to run above that figure then you can see the subvention is of no particular advantage to us.

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: At this point perhaps in fairness to those members who joined the delegation with the Minister of Mines and myself and to which Mr. Gillis referred in the telegram he read, I should say a word in connection with their representations made at that time. They made a number of representations to myself and my colleagues, Mr. Winters and Mr. Prudham, the main representation being for a delay in the dieselization program of the Canadian National Railways. It was my impression that the consensus of opinion was it was chiefly a social problem in that it affected the miners and the operators rather than a purely Department of Transport problem. However, I did indicate to the members of the delegation that I would communicate with the president of the Canadian National Railways in so far as the delay in the program was concerned but that that was a matter for internal management. In fairness to my colleagues I feel I should say I did communicate those representations to the president of the Canadian National Railways through the officers of the department. Now, there has not been an opportunity for me to discuss the matter more fully with the president of the Canadian National Railways since then. It may be felt that the statement which the president made should be relegated to the delegates directly from the minister, but it was brought about, as the committee knows, from the question which Mr. Gillis asked and the question Mr. McCulloch asked.

Now, during the course of those representations there followed a discussion on the costs of coal, and there was present over and above the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys, the chairman of the coal board, Mr. Uren, who gave his opinion as to these costs, and there was some difference of opinion as to what these costs were. I know that at the moment Mr. Prudham is giving some consideration to this matter. Of course, the problem can be met by increasing the subsidies. That would not be a matter for Transport; that would be a matter for the Dominion Fuel Board. The problem may also be met in part by a study of the costs, and I understand from Mr. Prudham that he is giving consideration to that now. I am sorry I am not able to give additional information on that and I hesitate to do it because it is not a matter which concerns the Department of Transport; it is a matter which concerns another department. There is another possibility and that is the change in the method of payment and it might be possible to arrive at some relief to these operators and to their miners by that alternative. I do not wish to say more than that because I am talking in a field which is not my own.

Mr. GILLIS: I understand that. The problem properly belongs to the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys and the coal board because that board was set up for the purpose of handling this problem. My reason for bringing it up here today is the Canadian National Railways buy that coal and a good place to talk about it is with Mr. Gordon. But, in the final analysis it belongs to the coal board to iron these things out.

Mr. Chairman, may I be permitted to ask Mr. Gordon another question?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not intend to stop you, but I am wondering if a small subcommittee of this committee could not meet with Mr. Gordon and with you and with the appropriate officers from his organization. Today we have a large group with us and we cannot properly do justice to your problem in my judgment and cover the work we have to cover before six o'clock tonight. Would that meet with your approval?

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: I would hesitate, with all deference, to accept that suggestion because already Mr. Prudham has suggested I see him about this matter, and perhaps Mr. Gordon and others.