

ways could get rid of the passenger traffic and look after freight traffic alone, they could make money. And I went on:

Now, that being the fact—and it was substantiated by an official of the other great railway system—why is there a proposal to spend in the city of Montreal a sum not less than \$50,000,000 and not more than \$100,000,000 for the purpose of providing greater facilities to carry on a part of the railway business which, according to the managers of both roads, will not pay under any condition?

I should like the House to bear that point in mind, because I want to come back to it.

If honourable members will refer to the Senate Hansard of March 16, 1932, they will see that I criticized the practice of giving free transportation, or passes, to railway officials and employees, their families and friends, and to members of Parliament and others, and I strongly advocated the abolition of that practice. I also advocated the complete abolition of franking of telegrams over all telegraph systems, and the abolition of franking of expressage, and I gave instances to illustrate what savings might be effected thereby. I am quite aware that it is not a popular thing to urge abolition of passes, but I want to emphasize once more the desirability, in my opinion, of having these suggestions carried out. Railway authorities told me at the time that many millions of dollars of extra revenue would be received if all persons who travelled on passes were required to pay their way. I pointed out, too, that if such action were taken there would not be nearly as much passenger traffic, because naturally when a person can travel on a pass he will take full advantage of it.

I dealt with the arrangement whereby a railway man after a certain length of service is entitled to a pass for his personal use on local lines, then after longer service to a pass for himself and his family, after a little longer service to a permanent pass, after still longer service to a pass good all over Canada, and, finally, after twenty-five years' service, to a pass for himself and family available over all the railways of the North American continent. That is a substantial privilege. I think long service should be rewarded in some other way, for undoubtedly the use of free transportation creates a bad impression in the public mind. The man who works on a farm, in a store, or in an office must dig down into his pocket for railway fare to nearby towns, but his brother working for the railway company is able to take the same trip free of expense. It is no wonder that the man who has to pay his way regards free transportation as a privilege enjoyed at his expense. He resents this emolument given to a privileged class of labour which, in addi-

Hon. Mr. BLACK.

tion, enjoys a considerably higher scale of pay. So far as members of Parliament are concerned, free railway transportation is a considerable convenience to us. In a sense ours are not strictly passes; they are free transportation to which we are entitled by statute. However, I think it would be well to discontinue the practice and in lieu of passes grant an additional travel allowance, graduated according to the distance members have to travel between their homes and the Capital.

I again draw this matter to the attention of my honourable friend the leader of the House (Hon. Mr. Dandurand) as another means by which the Government might bring about economy. True, the Government have to work through the railways, but I am satisfied that the railway management would be willing to co-operate in order to discontinue the issue of free passes.

As the evidence adduced before the committee has been already discussed, and, no doubt, will be still further discussed by other honourable members, I shall not detain the House with any lengthy reference to it.

I desire now to return to what seems to me an additional handicap in effecting economies on the railways. I would preface my remarks by saying that I intend to reflect not on the Government of the day alone, but as well on preceding governments. I think politics has played entirely too large a part in the administration of our railways.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: Hear, hear

Hon. Mr. BLACK: For a time the administration of the Canadian National Railways was to a large extent free from party politics. I hope I am wrong, but to-day I see what looks to me like political influence creeping into the management of the system. It reminds me of the activity exercised by politicians in the Maritime Provinces when I had less experience than I have to-day. At that time the Intercolonial Railway was the stamping ground of all the local politicians. Patronage went to Government members who represented the counties through which the railway ran, and its abuse was nothing more nor less than a scandal.

We do not want to see that condition brought back, but I am very much disturbed by what has happened in the last few months. Last autumn I was shocked to see in the press an announcement that the Government, or the Canadian National Railways, had determined to expend upwards of \$15,000,000 on the terminal in Montreal. No one knows how much the ultimate expenditure may be, but we shall be fortunate if it does not