

Mr. CARTER: In connection with that question, Mr. Gordon, I have heard complaints in my riding, that people shipping fish from one point—say, if they ship up through St. John's, they get a cheaper rate than if they ship say part way to St. John's and along the line...

Mr. GORDON: The freight rate structure is a most extraordinarily complicated subject and I am not qualified to deal with freight rates in detail without competent advisers being with me. However, it is wrong to talk in generalizations. I would have to know the specific case in every instance. But it is perfectly true that what you say could happen in a series of circumstances. There are rates which come into my mind right away, and as soon as I start talking about them, I know I will get into trouble because I do not know enough about it. But, the rates on the north side of Newfoundland are quoted on the assumption that a railway exists, although traffic comes down by ship, and those rates are beneficial to those out-port areas. But there is a history behind all these things and I would have to know the specific instance and I would have to review the history before I could deal with it intelligently.

Mr. CARTER: Would it be possible to take a specific case, say 100 pounds of fish originating in Burin and going to St. John's and that same shipment being put off say at Holyrood, say perhaps 20 miles short of St. John's?

Mr. GORDON: I will try to get that. I do not know if I can because, as I say, I know from experience it is a complicated matter. All I can say is there is a reason for it and secondly I know there is a good reason for it.

Mr. FULTON: Are those two different things?

Mr. CARTER: Well I would like to know the reason because I am thinking I may have a lot of questions to answer.

Mr. GORDON: It all depends on the point of view. You have through rates and you may have short-haul rates and 2-line rates—and it may be a question of the through rates versus short-haul rates. There are a lot of complications which politicians have devised for the last 100 years and which the railways have had to respond to. But I would have to know of the specific case in order to give you a story on it. In any case I may say that every one of the situations that you have mentioned is a matter of public knowledge and a matter of published tariffs. There are no secret rates, no understandings in regard to any rates quoted in the railway business. We have published tariffs and they have to be approved.

Mr. CARTER: I think, you see, that the ordinary fisherman would figure that the further distance his freight has to go the more it should cost.

Mr. GORDON: I wish everybody felt that; I wish everybody felt that about traffic.

Mr. CARTER: But when they find that there is some person shipping a longer distance and they pay a cheaper rate for it—well then of course they wonder why.

Mr. GORDON: Yes, it does not sound right, I agree with you, but there are good reasons for it, as I say. You do get questions of through rates versus short haul rates and maybe two-line rates. There may be complications of half a dozen factors. It may be that in the area you are talking about there is a shipping company—I do not know what the routing is. It may be handled more than once.

Mr. CARTER: No, there is no other one. It goes by boat say from Burin.

Mr. GORDON: Well, let me have a specific case and I will give you an answer to it. You have not that information here?

Mr. CARTER: No.

Mr. GORDON: Well, I will certainly have it analysed.