

APPENDIX No. 2

ing such amendments to the Railway Act of the Dominion as will make it compulsory for all railroads in Canada to pay their employees at least twice per month.

Mr. CHRYSLER, K.C.: I am not talking about that, I am talking about the amendment we are now considering.

Mr. JOHNSTON, K.C.: The amendment as drawn reads this way:—

290A. The wages of all persons employed in the operation, maintenance or equipment of any railway to which the Parliament of Canada has granted aid by way of subsidy or otherwise or which has been declared to be a work for the general advantage of Canada shall be paid at least semi-monthly.

Mr. CHRYSLER, K.C.: I do not want to criticise the language of the amendment, because that is not important for my purpose. I understand, as it read, that it refers to the persons employed in the operation of the road, meaning the gentlemen who are represented by their legislative representatives here. The shopmen who are mentioned in that resolution do not appear to come under it. I have not heard of their making any request until they came before you with that resolution which has just been read. I speak on behalf of the three large railways, and I say that in their business, with their ramifications, it is impracticable in the first place—that two payments a month cannot be made and kept up. It has been stated here—I am not sure whether it was the representatives of the trainmen or not—that the excuse as to its being impracticable would not apply if there were more subdivisions. As far as the C. P. R. is concerned I am instructed that there are three or four cities in which the pay sheets are prepared and sent out, namely, Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver and I am not sure which is the fourth—perhaps Calgary. The reports are not all brought to Montreal, but they are all brought into these four points—that is the report from each person who has to report. I do not know what the channels are through which they come, but the reports as to the hours of labour, days of labour of each employee come in and a pay sheet is made out and has to be checked. I do not know whether it has to be returned for that purpose or not. Probably it has, but at all events the operation consumes a considerable part of the time, even making monthly payments, and monthly payments, I understand, are promptly made. The Grand Trunk add to that a statement that the mere expenses on their system of providing the additional staff required would be a very considerable sum, I think something like \$70,000 per annum. Mr. Ogden, the auditor of one of the roads states that whatever might be said as to the proposal in years past it would be quite impracticable now to get the additional staff that would be required to carry out the change, because of the difficulty of getting labour during war time. The staffs in that railway and all railways are depleted more or less by men who have gone to the front, and it is out of the question now to make such a change. So much for the difficulties. Now for the merits of the proposal: these men come here, and I have no doubt they are duly accredited; I do not cast any doubt upon that, or upon the authenticity of the resolution which you have heard read, but in the correspondence you will see that these are matters of negotiations between the railway companies and these employees. They are all members of the organized brotherhoods. They make their agreements more or less frequently, and they are all agreed at the present time. That is to say, there are existing agreements in force. I understand from the newspapers—and I do not know it from my instructions—an agreement was entered into, covering a number of these employees this spring, after negotiations lasting some time and recently concluded. What do the agreements cover? They cover a good many things. I do not know that I ever saw one, but I have a general idea what they pertain to. They cover the rate of wages and the hours of labour. In the case of trainmen, the mileage allowance which counts as a day and all those things. Is this question of wages not a matter that should be settled in this agreement? Is it not part of it and is it not one of the terms? Is it proper for these