

Railway Act—Traffic by Water

accordance with the decision given by the Prime Minister last year or two years ago this man would be entitled to draw the full amount of his pension, \$100 a month, until his case would have been reviewed, but the decision of the department has been absolutely to the contrary. The only recourse he has now is to have his case reviewed by a quorum of the new commission that has been created. I want to ascertain from the minister whether, if this man makes application directly to the department at Ottawa, supporting his application first of all by medical evidence, second by a certificate of the mayor of the municipality in which he lives, and third, by letter from the parish priest, he will have a chance to come under the provisions of this appropriation?

Mr. SUTHERLAND: What the hon. gentleman is speaking of is a reconsideration of the man's pension; there are so many cases that are individual and the hon. gentleman knows I have no control whatever over the pension commission or the pension appeal court.

Sir EUGENE FISET: I am talking about relief.

Mr. SUTHERLAND: Yes, certainly.

At six o'clock the Speaker resumed the chair and the house took recess.

After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

RAILWAY ACT AMENDMENT

PROPOSAL TO BRING COASTAL SHIPPING UNDER JURISDICTION OF RAILWAY COMMISSION

On the order being called:

Resuming debate on the motion of Mr. Neill for the second reading of Bill No. 12, an act to amend the Railway Act (traffic by water).

Mr. NEILL: Stand.

Mr. MANION: No, Mr. Speaker; I regret I cannot agree to the hon. gentleman's request to have the bill stand. I had the floor the other evening, and on the matter being called I have either to take the floor or to pass up the bill.

The house resumed from Tuesday, February 12, consideration of the motion of Mr. Neill for the second reading of Bill No. 12, to amend the Railway Act (traffic by water).

Hon. R. J. MANION (Minister of Railways and Canals): I do not intend to take up [Sir Eugène Fiset.]

much of the time of the house, but I may say at once that after consideration the government feels it cannot agree to the second reading of the bill. I shall take a few minutes to give the reasons.

I well remember when I first came into the house some eighteen years ago listening to the late Mr. Joseph Armstrong who for some years put on the order paper each session a bill dealing with inland water shipping. His suggestion was that inland water shipping should be put under the board of railway commissioners in the same way as the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill) to-day suggests that coastal shipping should be put under that board. It is true there is a difference, but frankly I cannot see how one could be handled any more easily than the other. I well remember when Mr. Armstrong again and again brought up the bill the government of the day and succeeding governments refused to permit it to go through. In the same way this bill strikes me as not feasible. For example, according to this bill a coastal vessel starting at Vancouver would be under the jurisdiction of the board of railway commissioners as far as Montreal, should it go that far, but if it went west of Montreal, for that part of the voyage it would not be under the board. There are other anomalies of the same type in the bill which to my mind would make it not easily workable.

The section of the Railway Act which it is proposed to amend is section 358. I will read it:

The provisions of this act shall, in respect of tolls, tariffs and joint tariffs, so far as deemed applicable by the board, extend and apply to the traffic carried by any railway company by sea or by inland water, between any ports or places in Canada, if the company owns, charters, uses, maintains or works, or is a party to any arrangement for using, maintaining or working vessels for carrying traffic by sea or by inland water between any such ports or places.

That was in the original bill as enacted in 1906. The board of railway commissioners, on February 15, 1911, endeavoured to put that into effect, but six weeks later, on March 28, 1911, having given it further consideration, they sent out a circular containing the following words:

And it has decided, in view of the difficulties that will be placed in the way of companies operating ships engaged in port to port traffic in competition with local boats free from the provisions of the act, that the board is of the opinion that the present necessities of the case do not require enforcement of section 7 of the Railway Act.