

increase in rates to compensate, in large measure, for this increase in operating expenses, is inevitable. While there may be some hope that the cost of coal and rails and other supplies may come down and the increased volume of traffic may compensate for such increases as remain, it is difficult, in view of the political aspect of the situation, to believe that railroad wages will lend themselves to reduction under the natural laws of economics as will the industrial wage. A rate increase equivalent in result to the wage increase should, unquestionably, be made forthwith."

As against this it was only fair to place certain claimed savings and benefits as set forth by the administration. These were estimated to amount to about \$120,000,000, brought about only as "war economics" and accepted purely, as such by the people. There were also some claimed economics in operation in car mileage and freight handling.

"These savings and advantages are manifestly infinitesimal as compared to what the American people know and can see concretely,—deterioration of service and an effect upon railroad finance so alarming that, were the roads to be returned to private ownership under conditions to-day existent, a majority of our companies would be faced with bankruptcy," Mr. Mitchell declared.

The speaker then turned to the manifest danger and difficulties to be met in returning the railroads to their owners. There have been many suggestions as to this. "Many of the views expressed in these plans are admirable, though for the most part, they involve the laying of the railroad structure upon the operating table and performing upon it major surgical operations that will result in making it little resemble that transportation system which has served so well our public in the past. They propose such physical and financial readjustments of the railroad situation as, in my opinion, would leave the patient weak and disfigured and unable to bear the burdens which American commerce must throw upon him without interruption." He was opposed to the idea of guaranteeing a fixed return upon any road as it stifled achievement in operation.

"Perhaps the thought that I would contribute to the discussion leading to the solution of the railroad problem may be of interest. It is based upon the conclusion that government ownership and operation is not practical; that private ownership and operation freed from government regulation, has been shown by history to have its dangers and is not feasible; and that the situation must be worked out under private ownership and operation under fair and equitable regulation, the solution to be found with as little disturbance as possible of structures already existent."

"The corner to be turned must not be a sharp one. This return must be gradual, both in method and point of time. Let private management reinstate itself, with the requirement upon each road to pay over to the government any excess over the government guaranteed rental return, and with the right to call upon the government during the guaranty period for any deficit between its net operating revenue and such guaranteed rental. But let there be provision that at any time during this two to three year period of continued government guaranty, any railroad company may, if it so elect, release the government from its guaranty and receive thereafter the full net return resulting from its operations, subject to a division of excessive earnings as heretofore suggested. I am of the belief that, under this plan, the owners of the majority of our large railroad companies would release the government from its guaranty within the first year."

Mr. Mitchell concluded by pointing out that the United States would be seeking foreign investments and American bankers hoped to be of a assistance to Canada.

Voicing the appreciation of the club for Mr. Mitchell's address, Lord Shaughnessy expressed hearty approval of his conclusions. The situation in Canada was working out differently from that described by Mr. Mitchell. In his opinion a stupid public policy had led to an unnecessarily large increase of the mileage under government control. The system proposed was different from that in operation in the United States. The theory was that by the establishment of independent bodies railway operation would be kept aloof from politics. His hearers would recognize that this was

impossible. With the responsibility of the directing officers to Ottawa, Ottawa control would be inevitable and the officials themselves would inevitably become politicians.

The outlook was not reassuring. In Canada, unlike the United States, cabinet ministers were members of the House and were in control of the House. Of course, he added ironically, "ministers in our Canadian atmosphere rapidly become most capable." He knew himself of ministers from law offices in the west, or country stores in the east who within three months of official experience could easily instruct professional railroad operators. He agreed to the letter with Mr. Mitchell's arguments and conclusion. He was a bitter opponent of public ownership. He considered that it tended to destroy individual initiative and effort which would not improve our national life.

TERMINOLOGY OF FIRE PROTECTION

Definitions to be Suggested at the Annual Convention of the National Fire Protection Association

THE committee on Nomenclature of the National Fire Protection Association will, as usual, propose at the annual meeting to be held in Ottawa on May 6th, 7th and 8th, certain definitions of terms commonly used in fire protection. The report this year, however, merely presents the matters which were referred back for the consideration of the committee by the 22nd annual meeting held last year. The advance report says:—

"As before, the use of words and their definition is considered with relation to the orismology of fire protection. The definitions submitted are therefore such as will suit the terminology of fire protection rather than the general or popular use of the words or terms.

"*Flat Roof.*—The committee suggests the omission of this definition as not particularly useful, and possibly liable to be confused with the idioms of roofing manufacturers. As presented in the previous report, the distinction was made between roofs having a pitch of less than twenty (20) degrees and others. Those of flatter pitch are always liable to accidental loading, such as groups of people, storage of merchandise, erection of signs, etc. Many building codes very properly increase the allowable loading for roofs of flatter pitch than twenty (20) degrees. Hence the definition as submitted.

"*Fire Exit Partition.*—The term 'Fire Exit Partition' indicates a Fire Partition erected to provide an area of refuge from fire during the exit of the occupants from a building. Its fire resistance must be such as to afford at least one (1) hour protection.

"*Fire Partition.*—The term 'Fire Partition' indicates a wall subdividing a story of a building to restrict the spread of fire. Fire partitions are graded by performance tests, the minimum being one (1) hour protection.

"*Fire Wall.*—The term 'Fire Wall' indicates a wall subdividing a building to restrict the spread of fire. It shall have such thickness as to prevent the communication of fire by heat conduction.

"It shall have such stability as to remain intact after complete combustion of the contents of the building on one side of the wall; and its structural integrity shall be such as to be unaffected by any wreckage resulting from the fire or its extinguishment.

"In fire-resistive buildings having floors and roof meeting the requirements of four (4) hour protection, a fire wall need not be continuous through all stories, nor need it extend through the roof. In all other buildings it shall start at the foundation, be continuous through all stories, and extend above the roof."

Advance reports of most of the committees of the Association have been prepared as follows:—Safety to Life; Fire Pumps; Inflammable Liquids; Standardization of Pipe and Pipe Fittings; Gases; Electrical Committee; Automatic Sprinklers; Hazardous Chemicals and Explosives; Fire-resistive Construction; Field Practice; Signaling Systems.