

Hon. Mr. KERR—They are luxuries.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—The article continues:

This works out at an average of \$291,650,000 yearly, or at \$5,605,000 weekly, or at the rate of \$690 yearly per 100 of the population during the last ten years. When it becomes thus apparent that the English are taxed for what they eat, drink and smoke at the rate of over \$5,000,000 a week, the fiction of free food is blown to the winds, and the land of compromises rejoices in the possession of yet another strange contradiction which troubles nobody, and which is still used, by politician and layman alike, as though this at least were one of the fundamental trades of their insular social economy.

In a word, I would venture to say with reference to any attack which may be made upon the tariff, as a proposed remedy for the high cost of living, that the people of Canada are in no temper to permit any further trifling with the tariff. The agriculturists of Canada must be protected as well as the manufacturer, and any attempt to revise the tariff downward would be productive of protest from the whole agricultural community.

My hon. friend opposite made an allusion to that clause in the address dealing with the National Transcontinental railway, and made, I regret to say, a very sweeping statement as to the Government having reduced the standardization on that great railway system. I was under the impression that, last session of Parliament, such error had been removed from the public mind by the Government, if not in the Senate in the House of Commons. I make the statement now, that it is entirely erroneous and foundationless. I recall, upon the statement being made by my hon. friend, a communication which I received last session, upon this particular subject, and while it is somewhat lengthy, I will take the opportunity of attempting to set this matter right, and particularly with my hon. friend opposite, by reading it. I suppose my hon. friend has reference to the grade in the road.

Hon. Sir GEORGE ROSS (Middlesex)—Yes.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—I hold in my hand a letter from a prominent engineer, one of the foremost engineers in the Dominion, Mr. W. F. Tye. He says:

Ottawa, November 26, 1912.  
Honourable Frank Cochrane,  
Minister of Railways and Canals,  
Ottawa.

Dear Sir,—As requested, I have examined the profiles of the changes recently made in

grade on contracts Nos. 13, 14 and 15, districts 'C' and 'D' east and west of Cochrane.

These changes in grade will not decrease the haulage capacity of the locomotive, will not increase the running time of either freight or passenger trains and will not increase the operating or maintenance charges. On the contrary, they will, by decreasing the cost of construction, reduce the interest charges.

The total cost of transportation is the sum of the operating expenses and the interest charges. A railway to handle a given traffic is the most effective commercially, or can handle the traffic at the least cost, when the sum of these two items is the least. Any change of alignment, or grades, which reduces the fixed charges without increasing the operating or maintenance expenses, is, therefore, an improvement in the effective standard of the road.

These changes will reduce the interest charges without increasing the operating or maintenance expenses, or decreasing the haulage capacity or speed of the locomotive, and are therefore an improvement in the effective standard of the road.

I consider the commissioner and engineers of the Transcontinental would have failed in their duty had they not made these changes.

Respectfully yours,

W. F. Tye,  
Consulting Engineer.

Now here is a letter from the Commissioners on that same subject. It is as follows:

The Commissioners of the Transcontinental  
Railway.  
Ottawa, November 21, 1912.

Hon. F. Cochrane, P.C.,  
Minister of Railways and Canals,  
Ottawa.

Dear Mr. Cochrane,—In reference to the charges made in the newspapers: The gradients on the Transcontinental railway have been injuriously altered, I beg to point out, that the only change in the gradients made by the commissioners since September, 1911, was to allow a few sags to remain, where there have been subsidences and across soft muskegs which it would be inadvisable, from an engineering point of view, to fill at present to be operated temporarily or permanently as velocity grades. The presence of such sags in the railway does not injuriously effect the economical operation of the road. The same trains, carrying the same loads, making the same time, with the same expense and the same degree of safety and comfort, can be handled over a road in which such sags or velocity grades exist as on a road of the same ruling gradient in which there are no such sags or velocity grades.

By introducing these sags, all of which are well within velocity grade limitations, the commissioners will:

1. Save a large amount of money in the construction of the railway.
2. Expedite the completion of the road;
3. Should it become advisable, for any unforeseen reason in the future, to obtain those sags, it can be done at one-half the cost that the present contract prices call for;
4. In one case it has been found necessary to raise the grade in a cutting, the material in which is so soft and wet that it is impractic-