

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Now, Mr. Meighen, in 1922, when this fight was on in the House, was very clear-cut in his position. The vote was taken on this sub-amendment, moved by Mr. Baxter, the present Tory Premier of New Brunswick: "That in the opinion of this House the Crow's Nest Pass agreement should at once be abrogated." There was no equivocation in Mr. Meighen's speech on that occasion. He is consistent in bad works; he maintains the same position today; he is fighting to destroy the only safeguard the West has in regard to railway rates.

Some idea of what this may cost the West can be gained from the changes which took place in freight rates upon grain when the agreement was temporarily suspended during the war. Taking as a central point the city of Moose Jaw, we have the following rates:

Freight Rates Moose Jaw-Fort William In cents per 100 lbs.	
Crop of 1918 & 1919	24c
1920	32½c
1921	31c-29c
Crow's Nest Pass Rates Restored, 1922-25	20c

To bring the meaning of this difference home to the farmers of the Moose Jaw district, perhaps it would be well to quote an actual experience. On November 21, 1921, Richland Farms Limited, Marquis, shipped car No. 104,582 to Fort William. The freight on this car at 34 cents per 100 lbs. (plus \$2.00 inspecting and weighing fee), amounted to \$306.77 on the 89,640 lbs. of wheat. On November 2, 1922, one year later, when the Crow's Nest Pass rates were restored, this farm shipped another car and the rate from Marquis was reduced back to the old rate of 22 cents, a saving of 12 cents per 100 lbs., or a total saving of \$107.56 on the car. Figure the saving from another angle: In the Marquis district, the average farmer will have a crop of 6,000 bushels of wheat or 360,000 lbs. A saving of 12 cents per 100 lbs. in freight charges means an annual saving of \$432.00! These figures should bring home to the electors of Moose Jaw constituency the enormous savings effected by the Crow's Nest rates agreement secured for us by Laurier in 1897, restored to us by Mackenzie King in 1922, and which Mr. Meighen now publicly declares are "utterly indefensible." Mr. Meighen's stand on this question alone should make it quite impossible for any farmer in the Moose Jaw district, who has any regard for his own interests, or for justice for his fellow-farmers, to vote for Mr. Wellington White, the Meighen candidate in this constituency. Mr. Meighen's declaration that the statutory Crow's Nest rates are "utterly indefensible" should alone ensure the election of Mr. J. Gordon Ross, the Liberal standard-bearer.

What the rate would be in the future, if the Crow's Nest control was removed, is, of course, impossible to say. The railroads place great emphasis upon their argument that they are carrying grain at a loss. The Tories stress continuously the parallel of American rates. Wall Street, which has shown its very definite alliance with the Tory party in this campaign, talks of freight increases which would raise the freight earnings of the railroads \$60,000,000 a year. We may soften these estimates considerably by considering them as more or less the happy dreams of the defenders of privilege, but if we assume the restoration of a rate upon grain, which would be the average rate of the years given above, it would strike at roughly eight cents above the present rate from Calgary, or \$64.00 on a car of grain. I make no claim as to this being the probable outcome. There is every indication that it would be that, but even if we cut it in two we have a loss to Western Canada of at least \$10,000,000; the more probable figure is \$25,000,000. It would be a loss equivalent to approximately two-thirds of the entire expenditure for provincial governments in the three prairie provinces. One may arrive at an approximately accurate statement by saying that perhaps \$5,000,000 of this burden would fall upon Manitoba,—it is closer to market,—and the balance be divided between Alberta and Saskatchewan; saddling the people of these provinces with an additional burden of somewhere around \$10,000,000 for each province. But it is the farmers who would foot the bill; they are the ones who would pay; they are the ones who would swallow the dose.

And who prescribes this remedy? Who would force these high rates? Every single opponent of the Liberals in the present contest. Add to that those Progressives who, from native ignorance, or natural inclination, or for some selfish purpose, support the Tory party. Lucas, of Camrose, is one who stands up in this contest fighting to impose higher freight rates on the farmers of Western Canada. Davis, of East Calgary, is another in the ranks, a servile Tory; he will bow down to every god that Toryism offers him. The same thing applies to Bury and Jamieson in Edmonton, and to LaFrance in Red Deer, and Russel in Wetaskiwin. These men are tied hand and foot to the Tory machine; as for Mr. Bennett, his natural inclination has been that way. He has been a servant of the railways so long he can serve no other master; he will serve them to the end of his days. And in this class go also those dissenting Progressives who, by their votes, did their best to put the Tories in the saddle. It also includes Mr. R. M. Johnson, who has entered the Moose Jaw contest contrary to the policy and desire of the Progressive leader, Mr. Robert Forke, with no other purpose to serve than to satisfy his personal revenge against the Liberals. Mr. Johnson thinks more of injuring the Liberal cause than of promoting the interests of this constituency by way of ensuring a low tariff policy and safeguarding the Crow's Nest Pass rates.

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