

tired of trying to stabilize things. Every day there come new rulings from his department. He is blessed in having close to him a very efficient tariff board which is doing a good job if only he would pay some attention to its recommendations. I see the Minister of Mines and Resources (Mr. Crerar) looking inquiringly at me. I say to him, let the tariff board function freely and put its recommendations into effect, and the government will get some use out of the board. It helps very much in the administration of the customs laws, but there are so many rulings every day that people are confused. The most favoured nation treatment is extended to twenty nations. In 1936 it was extended to the United States, as well as eighteen new articles of agreement, and altogether there are so many new regulations that the ordinary business man in Canada is bewildered. We are in the midst of an excise tax muddle, and in the next three weeks the situation will be worse. We do not know what we are going to do about it. Instead of stability we have instability in the conduct of the Department of National Revenue. The regulations all make it harder for the business man to carry on. That top profit of one, two or three per cent which he counts on is skimmed off by the rulings, and it is more difficult for him to do business.

I am glad to note that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Howe) has entered the chamber. I wanted to say something about clause 5 of the 1936 promises. In regard to the Canadian National Railways parliamentary responsibility was promised, and the hope was held out that railway losses would be reduced and capital expenditures curtailed wherever possible. I ask the minister this question: Will he spend twelve and a half or twenty-five millions in Montreal on the Canadian National Railways? Can he say that the government has restored to parliament the responsibility for the conduct of that road and that it has reduced losses? Are the assets in better shape than they were three or four years ago? The government may reply in the affirmative, but what about the cost? Will the cost of operating that system be less this year than it was last year? Will it be reduced in accordance with the promises made four short years ago?

The radio system is operated under my hon. friend's department. According to clause 6 of the 1936 promises, a radio inquiry was promised, and it was said that an independent corporation would be set up. What have we had? The conduct of radio in Canada has been vexatious to the Canadian people. Last year, as the minister will remember, he proposed to increase the fee, but after some consideration he rose in his place in the house

and said that the fee would not be increased. In my opinion the fee system is wrong. It is excessive and unnecessary, and you cannot make the ordinary man in the street understand why he should pay for the use of the air. The fee should be abolished. Now the government is faced with a greater difficulty. In the old days before the introduction of radio, men could stand on boxes at the street corners or in the parks and exercise the right of free speech to their hearts' content, and the then government instituted section 98 of the criminal code. This government wiped out section 98 and substituted censorship by the radio corporation. That body censors whatever goes over the air to the Canadian people. In my opinion the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation should be told in plain language that we have made enough capital expenditure for the time being and that they should slow down and be more responsible to parliament.

Last night the Prime Minister seemed to be a little weary. Although he was master of the ship he could not leave the helm but had to stay there all the time in order to guide the ship of state. He has guided it through stormy waters, he says; but "around and around in a circle it goes, and where it is going nobody knows." In his younger days, as I remember him when I first came to this house in 1922, he must have been a midshipman or cabin boy, because he said that the 1919 platform of the Liberal party was merely a compass or a chart to go by. He had his eyes glued to the compass. Now that he is entrenched in the leadership of his party he has moved up to captain. He is now captain of the ship and he stays at the helm—doing what? Is he carrying out the pledges of 1936? Most of them we have heard nothing about.

For instance, take the parliamentary secretaryships. They have been put down the hatch, away down below the water-line, and have been covered over with excess baggage. We have heard nothing about that subject. I am rather in accord with the idea of parliamentary secretaryships. When I see some of the ministers unable to do all the work that comes to their desks, I think parliamentary secretaryships should be established. Some of the men I see here who are not doing a real day's work when in Ottawa, in the House of Commons, could be put to work as secretaries under ministers to help them in the discharge of their duties. When municipal bodies or the public generally come to Ottawa to see a minister of the crown, whom do they see? You cannot get close to the minister. The efficient secretaries—and they are good secretaries and do work hard, being

[Mr. Harris.]