

What gives us a clear proof of the difficulties met in the management of such a vast undertaking, always depending on the fluctuations of business, is that this statement shows a drop in the gross revenue of \$16,752,948 and in the net revenue of \$13,381,497 compared with 1928, a decrease attributed to the inferiority of the western crop in 1929, and more especially to the sale of wheat at a lower price. The fall in revenue from the shipment of wheat alone represents a loss of \$15,500,000 compared with the previous year. It is also known that the discontinuing of western harvest excursions has brought on a loss of over \$1,000,000 to the Canadian National Railways.

It is evident that the various workshops of the National Railways depend on traffic fluctuations and many uncontrollable circumstances. For the reason given, the present management felt justified in closing a number of local workshops, to the detriment of many towns, in order to reduce expenditures to a minimum.

Yet the town of Joliette which clamours for the rebuilding of the National Railways workshops, can base its claims on especially strong grounds. In fact, it requests the rebuilding of those workshops under the terms of a contract, old it is true, which required the Canadian National Railways to build and maintain permanently workshops for repairs of all cars to be used over a large section, from Hawkesbury, in Ontario, as far as Quebec and also at various other points. Moreover, has not the town of Joliette some acquired rights, by the fact that it owes one-third of its commercial and industrial expansion to the old workshops which greatly contributed to its development and to the welfare of its citizens? If I have drawn the attention of the house to this question of vital importance to my district, it was to create a feeling of sympathy in favour of my town and in order that the C.N.R. officials may realize that they may at times make sacrifices for the benefit of certain provincial towns, so as not to hinder too greatly their progress. In expressing my gratitude to the present management of the National Railways who have kindly heard my just claims and in a certain measure have granted them, might I most respectfully suggest to them that they should still do more for the town of Joliette by rebuilding their workshops without any further delay, thereby giving shelter to our good workers of Joliette who are now exposed to the varying weather of the seasons. In a word, reconsider that important contract and give it a more favourable interpretation, not only conforming to the letter but to the spirit of each clause.

[Mr. Ferland.]

I wish, sir, to avail myself of the excellent financial situation of Canada as announced in the present budget to once more remind the house and also the government, which presides over our destinies with such perspicuity, ability, benevolence and zeal, of the question relating to the construction of a railway which would link Montreal to the Transcontinental, passing through Joliette, and which it was agreed to call the Joliette Parent branch via St. Michel-des-Saints.

For over a quarter of a century the counties of Joliette and Berthier have been clamouring for this railway.

I never conceived the idea of a Transcontinental without a branch line which would link it to the Canadian metropolis, stated, in 1908, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who had subsidies, at the time, voted for the construction of 200 miles of railway intended to link Montreal with the Transcontinental.

Ever since that time, many efforts have been made by the Chamber of Commerce and Municipal Council of Joliette. Many resolutions, endorsing this request, have been adopted by imported public bodies of Montreal, by its French and English Boards of Trade, by the Business Men's Association, by the League of property owners of Montreal.

In February, 1929, an important delegation of the Chamber of Commerce of Joliette, accompanied by a number of federal and provincial members, among whom were the hon. member for Joliette in the Quebec Legislature (Mr. Lucien Dugas), and the hon. members for Berthier Maskinongé (Mr. Gervais), for L'Assomption-Montcalm (Mr. Séguin), for St. Denis (Mr. Denis), for Hochelaga (Mr. St-Père), for St. Henri (Mr. Mercier), for Maisonneuve (Mr. Robitaille), etc., went to meet the executive committee of the city of Montreal in order to ask them to officially endorse, on behalf of the Canadian Metropolis, the request of the citizens of Joliette and elsewhere. A few months later, just before the end of the 1929 session, I had the honour of forwarding to the government a resolution of the Council of the city of Montreal earnestly recommending to them the construction of this railway which would link up the metropolis with the Transcontinental, pursuant to the resolution of the Municipal Council and Chamber of Commerce of Joliette.

It was the first time that the city of Montreal expressed itself publicly, by means of a resolution through its municipal council. Now that the city of Montreal has spoken officially, the objection can no more be made to us that one often heard: "But you request a railway to help the city of Mont-