

Reid) a letter which contains all the arguments and I cannot do better than read it. The city of Quebec is situated 300 miles from Matapedia and 500 miles from Gaspé, both being terminal points of this railway and the letter shows conclusively that the question is not merely of local interest to the Gaspé peninsula, but that it is of interest to a very large section of Eastern Canada. The letter reads as follows:

QUEBEC, June 11, 1920.

HON. J. D. REID,
Minister of Railways,
Ottawa.

Dear Sir,—The Quebec Board of Trade understand that the people of the counties of Bonaventure and Gaspé have petitioned the Government to take over the two railways forming the shore line of communication on the Baie des Chaleurs between Matapedia, on the Canadian National railway, and Gaspé, a distance of 202 miles, because the service is very defective and unsatisfactory.

The Quebec Board of Trade would strongly endorse this petition, for the following reasons:

The railway in question, if put into good shape and operated by and in connection with the Intercolonial, would prove a very valuable feeder for the Government Railway system.

The counties of Bonaventure and Gaspé are two of the most important counties of the province of Quebec, sustaining a population of about 80,000 people which is rapidly increasing owing to their great natural resources. The soil of this district is of the very best, the climate good, permitting of the cultivation of wheat, fruit and of anything that can be grown in other parts of the province. The dairy industry is flourishing, and the country abounds in lumber which gives work to many saw mills and to some very large industries in the making of pulp and pulp wood. This business could be vastly increased if the grades and physical condition of the railway would permit of the hauling of freight trains of average capacity, so that freight rates could be made more reasonable.

But whilst the agricultural and lumbering resources of this splendid country are as important as those of any other part of the province, the Gaspé peninsula has a greater source of wealth in its fisheries. The waters of the Baie des Chaleurs, that great arm of the sea, nearly 200 miles in length, and of the Gulf of St. Lawrence adjacent thereto, literally teem with fish of the best quality. Salmon are caught in abundance, and also codfish, haddock, herring, halibut, lobsters, etc. The fisheries of the Baie des Chaleurs have been noted for more than two centuries. They have been carried on by wealthy firms from Jersey during that time and latterly by fish merchants of Gloucester and other places in the United States, who take away and repack this valuable food, and then send it all over the continent as being the product of their own fisheries.

The Jersey firms export their fish dried or salted to the Mediterranean, West Indies, Brazil and other places in South America.

The result is that the Canadian fisherman gets a mere pittance for his fish, not to be compared with the price paid to the fishermen in British Columbia, whose fish put fresh into refrigerator car at Prince Rupert, gives him three times the price paid to the Gaspé fishermen.

The completion of the railway to Gaspé should have changed this situation, and should have made these rich fisheries a source of food supply in fresh fish of the finest quality for the people of Eastern Canada. But it has not done so, because the railway has not had the financial ability to put in the necessary plant nor to give a quick service to Canadian cities.

In England and Scotland the fisheries are utilized to provide cheap food for the people, by means of food facilities at Grimsby, Aberdeen and other points, with a fast train service which puts the fresh fish into every important centre of Great Britain a few hours after it is landed, so that poor people can have this food at one-third of the price of meat.

The high cost of living makes this article of diet just as important for the people of Canadian cities.

The Quebec Board of Trade would therefore most earnestly recommend that the Government should acquire the railways between Matapedia and Gaspé, improve them, put in cold storage facilities at Gaspé, Port Daniel and Paspébiac, and run refrigerator cars with fresh fish to the markets of Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto.

We respectfully contend that it is quite as important for the country to develop this source of cheap food supply, as it is to develop the wheat growing districts of the West.

Yours respectfully,

J. T. ROSS,
President,
Quebec Board of Trade.
T. Le VASSEUR,
Secretary.

I have nothing to add to this letter, and I cordially endorse everything that is set forth in it. It is certainly a very remarkable plea in favour of the demand presented by my hon. friend from Gaspé (Mr. Lemieux).

Mr. W. S. LOGGIE (Northumberland, N.B.) (Translation): Mr. Chairman, before speaking in English, I wish to say a few words in French on the subject of the railway situated in my constituency. I regret very much my inability to speak fluently the French language. I beg therefore to be excused if I continue my remarks in English.

Several hon. MEMBERS: (Translation): Hear, hear.

Mr. LOGGIE: I take this opportunity, and I do it with some pleasure, of referring to the first speech that I made in Parliament. The theme of that speech was the construction of a branch line railway starting at Newcastle, N. B., and ending at Tracadie in the county of my hon. friend from Gloucester (Mr. Turgeon). Let me first of all point out that Newcastle is a point on the main line of the Intercolonial forty miles south from Bathurst. At the present time there is what is known as the Caraque and Gulf Shore Railway,