

provide this service. At present we are paying large sums to subsidize ships to go to South Africa, Australia, and other far-off parts of the world with our products. Why should not we do the same thing in the case of the United States, which we can reach in twenty-four hours from the places where the fish are landed? I would like some of my hon. friends on the other side to struggle with that question and tell me if they can, why that trade should not be cultivated. The Prime Minister must be as much interested in this as I am, for he represents a county with a very long sea-coast and among the inhabitants of which are a number of hardy fishermen. We have the fish on the coast and we have the men to catch them; we have, in fact, everything but the market.

This is not a party question but a business question, and one that a business government ought to deal with. As this is a friendly discussion, I do not wish to criticise, but I would remind my hon. friend from Digby (Mr. Jameson) that freight rates have been increased since the present Administration came into power. The rate for express, I understand, is the same as it was before, but the freight rate on fresh fish from Nova Scotia to Montreal is higher than it was in 1911. I am surprised that my hon. friend from Digby, or my hon. friend from Shelburne and Queens (Mr. McCurdy), did not put in a protest when that was done. The increase between Mulgrave and Amherst, or Mulgrave and Truro, is something like \$12 a carload, and this increase of rates was made by the present Minister of Railways to the disadvantage of the fish trade in the local market. I think the old rate should have been allowed to stand; if the department could not afford to reduce it, at least they should not have increased it. If we are to be confined to the Canadian market for our fish, we want as cheap transportation as we can get.

Mr. JAMESON: The hon. member has taken it for granted that I did not make a protest with respect to the increase in the freight rates. I may tell him that I did make this the subject of an interview, a somewhat warm one, between the Minister of Railways and myself. And that is what I mean when I say that you can not do anything with these men who are not at the top and who are not themselves responsible for the rates. The hon. gentleman, I am sure, will agree with me in that.

[Mr. Sinclair.]

Mr. SINCLAIR: I am glad my hon. friend did make a protest, but I am sorry that it was not effective.

Mr. JAMESON: That is why we want to get their experts before the committee provided for in the resolution. We will then be able to show them the facts, and perhaps convince them.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Perhaps I do not understand my hon. friend, but surely this is a matter which the minister and his department can settle. If the minister wishes to give an advantage to the transportation of fresh fish, it is quite within his power to do so.

Mr. JAMESON: But the point taken was that the Minister of Railways was advised by his officers that certain rates had to be charged in order to make the business pay, and he did not want to use the railway to give a bonus; he said the Department of Marine was giving a bonus.

Mr. SINCLAIR: I am not referring to what the Department of Marine is doing—the assistance that department is giving to pay the express rates is satisfactory—but I am referring to the freight rate from Mulgrave to points along the Intercolonial, where the increase was, I think, much larger than it ought to have been, and which increase has interfered, I have no doubt, with the trade.

I am glad to see the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir George Foster) in his place, also the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Hazen), and the Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden), and I would like to impress upon these gentlemen the importance of assisting the transportation of fresh fish from points on the eastern coast of Canada to the Boston and New York markets. I have no doubt that it would be of immense advantage to the fishing industry. Ask any merchant on the coast and he will tell you that if we could get in touch with those markets we could get better prices, and could be sure that we would always sell our fish. Why should we subsidize ships to distant parts of the world and leave unimproved an opportunity to develop the greatest Canadian industry that it is possible to develop? The supply of fish is inexhaustible; we have the whole Atlantic ocean to draw upon, and you cannot fish it out. They have been fishing cod off Canso for 300 years; the Breton fishermen were there in the fifteenth cen-