

I have shown the Farm truck figures merely to show that if indeed as we are told we are deficient in one segment of the trucking industry, it is with some pride we can look at the figures for a little province like Prince Edward Island in respect of the utilization of Farm trucks.

It does, in the light of these figures, seem impossible to say that the maritime trucking industry has lagged in its development as a direct result of railway subsidization under the Maritime Freight Rates Act. There is no direct evidence so far produced which would prove that a subsidy to the railways leads to an automatic decline of the trucking industry. For instance, despite the "bridge subsidy", which has been in effect for quite some years now, the growth of trucking between central and western Canada has been astounding.

I would respectfully ask you to turn to page 30 of the Canadian Trucking Associations brief and to the section numbered 3. The statement is made there that the highest rate increases occurred on the movements between the maritimes and central Canada—67.4 per cent from central Canada to the maritimes and 55.6 per cent from the maritimes to central Canada. The brief goes on:

Here, of course, truck competition is weakest, although the potential for development of the long-haul trucking industry is a good and a fertile field for the same interest by the maritimes transportation commission which the commission has displayed towards other aspects of the freight rate problem.

While I certainly believe and hope that highway transportation between central Canada and the Atlantic provinces will continue to grow, I cannot quite share the optimistic view inherent in the Canadian Trucking Associations' submission that all will be well with the maritimes when our provinces get more trucking competition. I do not expect much of our crude gypsum, our coal, our ore, our pulp wood to move by truck over the long hauls to central Canada, nor do I expect to see truck movements at reasonable rates on some of our requirements from central Canada such as ferro-alloys from Welland to Sydney or pig iron from Sault Ste. Marie to Sackville, New Brunswick.

While competition with the railways will undoubtedly increase with the St. Lawrence seaway as suggested at page 31 of the Canadian Trucking Associations' brief, we in the Atlantic provinces will not likely share in such benefits. As a matter of fact, we might very well find our net position to be less favourable as a result of such competition.

In essence, the stand taken by Canadian Trucking Associations is that the free play of competition between rail and truck is the best way of bringing about a satisfactory solution of the transportation problem in Canada and that competition is the answer to the admittedly disproportionately high transportation costs of the Atlantic provinces.

It is for this reason that Canadian Trucking Associations opposes Bill C-38 and I note that the brief submitted by the trucking industry quotes with approval statements made by counsel for the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways in 1955 to the effect that competition is the best regulator. I may be wrong, but to me it seems that the logical conclusion of the argument of free competition as the best regulator and that free competition might redound to the ultimate benefit of the public is to say that economic regulation of transportation should be abandoned altogether. That suggestion has indeed been made. It has been made in the United States where somebody has gone so far as to advocate the abolition of the Interstate Commerce Commission, which is the counterpart of the Board of Transport Commissioners in this country. That, as I am instructed, is not the view taken by the trucking industry of this country at all, nor of its provincial segments. In fact,