

with enduring production in Canada, than transportation routes, and the urgent demand for a reduction in the price of transportation. Tax payers look with distrust at any suggestion of a new transportation route. On the other hand ugly facts regarding production stare us in the face.

Agricultural production, in western Canada, which otherwise offers such limitless exportable resources, is reported to be in danger of not enduring, on account of profitless returns as compared with competing countries where transportation to markets, pays a lower price—

I want to draw your attention particularly to this remark because I believe it is absolutely true:

The merchant whose desk overlooks the great harbour, and whose visitors smack of the sea, is no more concerned with international trade, than the farmer a thousand miles from the seaboard.

Now if the cost of moving goods is exorbitant it simply dries up the channels of trade. It is like the hardening of the arteries in the human body. It simply means that in the not far distant future the whole course of business will come to an end. Reduction in the cost of transportation is an absolute necessity in this country. Sometimes a thing may be an absolute necessity and yet not be within the bounds of probability. However, I do hope that there may be some method and some way adopted whereby we can reduce the cost of transportation, because I believe that upon the solving of this problem the future prosperity of our country to a very large degree depends. We want the shortest and the cheapest routes to be utilized. We sometimes speak about our Canadian harbours. I want to see all the trade possible brought to our Canadian harbours. I want to see every harbour used to the extent that it is possible to use it with economy and to the best advantage.

I want to say a few words about the Hudson Bay railway. I know a great many gentlemen in this House are anxious to get a little more information in regard to this very much needed enterprise. In fact, I know that two members in this part of the House have taken the trouble during the recess to go over the Hudson Bay route, examining the condition of the roadbed, viewing the harbour and all the improvements that have been made up there, and if we seem a little exuberant in this part of the House over the building of the Hudson Bay railway, give us credit at least for trying to get all the information we possibly can upon this undertaking. I hope one of these gentlemen at least, and perhaps both of them, will tell the House what they saw and the condition of things generally in connection with the Hudson Bay railway. They came

back with a fine story, that there was a grand country up north, that it was well worth building a railroad into if for no other purpose than colonization, that there was great wealth up in that northern country. All over the west during this last year there have been meetings held by boards of trade and resolutions passed by agricultural societies and other bodies. In the city of Winnipeg we have organized to-day a "Build the Hudson Bay road" society. I want the government and hon. members of this House to understand that not for one moment can this subject be downed, because the West is determined to have the Hudson Bay railway built, and it will be built, I believe, in the not far distant future. Bear in mind that a great many people have expressed a well-founded opinion on the feasibility of this route. For over three hundred years the ships of the Hudson's Bay Company were passing in and out of that harbour, and they had very, very few accidents in all those years. However, I think this subject will be dealt with at another time.

Another matter that is mentioned in the Speech from the Throne is the satisfactory showing made by the Canadian National Railways and the progress they have made during the past year. I think every lover of our country must rejoice in the fact that we see these roads on the way to prosperity. Year by year the conditions are improving and in the not very far distant future I believe we are going to have a valuable system of railways in this country in the possession of the people.

There is an idea, and it is not original with me—it has been mentioned quite frequently in this House—and that is that the over-capitalization of the National Railways ought to be written off and a re-valuation made, which would represent the actual value of the road, and in that way the Board of Management would be given an opportunity to show what could be done under government ownership of railways. At the present time the railways are loaded with money that was misspent, money that might just as well have been thrown into the sea. That expenditure was a national loss and the nation will have to stand that loss ultimately anyway, and it seems to me it would be good business to write down that over-capitalization to a figure that the railways actually represent. That would encourage the Board of Management and the people, and perhaps make it possible in the not far distant future to have a drastic cut in freight rates over the roads. I would like to say in connection with the Board of