

laugh about any new idea, at the same time that they see their country deteriorating into an abject, hopeless, impotent expanse of poverty and misery—in many cases, see their own province doing so. Meanwhile the inequity of the freight rate structure exists, and it is the duty of the men in charge of this country to see that the wrong is remedied. My time will not permit me to go into as much detail as I should like to do in connection with this matter. Probably I shall have more to say about it at some other time.

I am going to refer to a statement that appeared in the Toronto *Globe and Mail* and was reprinted on January 22 in the *Fundy Fisherman* dealing with freight rates from which Prince Edward Island suffers. Let me read the exact words:

Maritime province farmers have reason for complaint. According to provincial government officials attending the Ottawa conference, Prince Edward Island cheese is shipped to Montreal, weighed there and then sent back to Halifax over much the same route, for export to England. The producers receive the Montreal price, less the wholly unnecessary freight charges, since all cheese exported from Canada is paid for on the basis of Montreal prices.

I have tried that bit of information on several prominent Canadians and in every single instance they have found it utterly impossible to believe that such a condition existed or was permitted to exist in this country.

Thus, at a time when the railway between Montreal and Halifax is jammed with trains carrying vital war materials and munitions, and scores of miles of additional passing tracks had to be constructed to facilitate traffic, we have the strange spectacle of maritime province cheese destined for Britain being shipped more than a thousand miles merely for the purpose of being weighed. Is there any reason why the cheese could not be weighed and graded at Charlottetown or Halifax?

The maritime farmers have another grievance: Hogs raised within sight of Halifax harbour are paid for on the basis of prevailing Montreal prices, less the freight rate from Halifax to Montreal, which means Nova Scotia farmers get about sixty cents per hog less than Quebec farmers. That may be reasonable enough if the hogs are to be slaughtered in Montreal, but it seems a bit thick when they are killed, pickled and packed in Halifax and sent directly overseas, with the overseas price to the Canadian bacon board based on delivery at the Atlantic seaboard.

Is it any wonder the maritime producers are angry after taking the matter up with Ottawa and getting nowhere?

That last statement is, I think, a challenge to Canada. It is the fact that the maritime provinces have taken up these problems at Ottawa and have got nowhere in dealing with such flagrant abuses as this.

The whole thing shows a lack of proper consideration.

These are moderate words, I would say.

I did not take the trouble to look up authorities in this matter and I am taking what they say. My time is finished and I will close with this observation. I will merely touch upon the fourth main disability of the provinces, the credit structure, and pass on. We must take action with regard to credit facilities in Canada. Here we have four disabilities from which the provinces of this country, from end to end, are suffering excruciatingly—four disabilities which are hampering the productive power and the war strength of the nation at every turn.

In all sincerity, in all humility and good nature, I suggest to the government that they take steps immediately to remedy these abuses, that they see to it first of all that industry in Canada is decentralized; second, that price parity is established within the provinces. In order to do this, they might plan production, working with the provincial governments and with the producers that we may not have too much goods and yet have enough. Again, let them render it possible for any worthy institution or individual in Canada to obtain credit. Let them modify his costs so that he can produce. Let them provide markets for him one way or another. It may be said, "But we cannot get external markets". I am not asking for external markets. The thing that astounds me is that the men in this government do not realize that one can have internal markets without depending upon markets abroad.

Let the government manage prices by producing plenty through the bonusing of labour costs and production costs in order to allow the primary producers to get fair prices for their products and to obtain at fair prices the commodities they have to buy.

Let the government discharge their responsibility, entered into at the time of confederation, to provide freight and other transportation as a service, giving all the people throughout the dominion a fair chance in the matter of freight rates.

Let the government devise and enforce an equitable freight rates structure planned to aid producers and consumers and not to enrich the shareholders of big railways.

Finally, let the government discharge their responsibility under item 15 of section 91 of the British North America Act, in which the dominion was given charge and responsibility concerning banking and credit, which means that it is Canada's business to see that the credit-worthy people of the country receive credit whether the bankers think they ought to receive it or not.