

*Transportation*

the commission to say no than to say yes to a request for a special investigation. In fact, my experience has been that the weighting is about 75 per cent in favour of no and 25 per cent in favour of yes. In other words, after a certain period of time has passed the commission will develop patterns of thinking and sort of get into a rut. With all due respect to the minister and his desire to give fair treatment to those who may be requesting special investigations or making appeals, I am afraid that those making those requests will be out on a limb, so to speak, without very much opportunity of obtaining any redress.

Perhaps the minister is of the opinion that what he is doing here is the answer for those who wish to have their rates investigated. However, in my view I think the chances of a person accomplishing what he is setting out to accomplish by having a special appeal are thwarted by the way in which the provision has been written into the bill.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I wonder whether the hon. member for Saint John-Albert could pay attention to me now, and I think it would be a good idea if he stayed with the hon. member for Halifax so that they could both hear what I am about to say. I am happy to say I do not seem to have lost all my faculties because I guessed the answer to this question. However, I have it now in black and white. The Canadian National-Canadian Pacific Act never applied to Canadian Pacific Railway routings but only to the Canadian National. The Canadian Pacific rates have been kept the same because of competitive factors.

Perhaps I should not try to interpret the mind of the late Prime Minister Bennett who introduced this legislation, but I suspect the reason was that while Canadian National has some choice of routes to United States ports the Canadian Pacific does not. The Canadian National could use Canadian National lines in Canada or the Grand Trunk line to Portland. The Canadian National could, therefore, protect Canadian ports in this respect. As I have already indicated, the Canadian Pacific has no choice. They have no line going to any United States port, and if they want to keep the traffic they have to send it over their own line. They do that. In any event, the repeal of the Canadian National-Canadian Pacific Act will take nothing away because the obligation was never imposed on the Canadian Pacific at any time.

**Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert):** I appreciate the minister's explanation of these circumstances. Provided the minister's advice that

the Canadian National-Canadian Pacific Act only covered the Canadian National with regard to matter of shipping to Canadian ports, then my fears are unfounded. It might be that I will be ambitious enough to check that and make certain.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** As the hon. gentleman knows, I did not check it myself. I would not have too much confidence in the result if I did. I have sought the advice of the draftsmen and law officers, and this is the advice I am given. I feel quite sure it is correct.

**Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert):** This is no reason for the minister not putting something in the bill.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I think that the hon. gentleman has a point there. If as a result of the studies that are now being made we find there would be any practical effect in doing so, then I think it would be a good thing to do. Quite honestly, I nearly answered on impulse when the hon. gentleman was speaking because, having the map pretty well in my own mind, I could see that line to Portland and I could see how the Canadian National could circumvent this provision. However, I could not see how the Canadian Pacific could without losing the traffic altogether to United States railroads. I do not imagine they would want to do that.

If there were some useful purpose to be served, there would be no reason for not doing this, particularly once we accept the principle that if we impose an obligation like this on the railways and it is not compensatory, then they should be compensated. Perhaps I should say that I accept quite cheerfully the admonitions of the senior member for Halifax. He is quite right when he says we should never have a national transportation policy at any foreseeable time in the future in this country if it is based exclusively on compensatory rates. We are not trying to do that. What we are trying to do is to make the various carriers earn their living if they can, but above all to make sure there is adequate transportation for Canadians in every part of Canada. If some part of that transportation system has to be paid for by the taxpayers, then it will not be the first time that has happened in Canada. We would not have confederation without it.

**Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert):** I do not mind saying to the minister that I am still a bit worried about the final effect of the removal