

have a pretty broad inquiry into the field of transportation. That, in essence, is what you say. You do not know too precisely where you might go, but the problem is so complex that you require a complete inquiry? You support Mr. Pearson's viewpoint, in other words?

Mr. COOPER: Yes, and I would add, with special attention being given to and with special emphasis being placed upon the loss, as we have said, of the relative advantage which maritime shippers obtain under the Maritime Freight Rates Act. That is the central point of our submission. We consider that we have lost that relative advantage. We think it should be restored. We think an inquiry into the ways and means of making such restoration is necessary. That inquiry might be far reaching once one got into it, but the central point is as I have stated.

Mr. PASCOE: Madam Chairman, I hope this question is not out of order. I realize this is a brief from the Maritime Transportation Commission and that the most vocal members of the committee today are from the maritimes. However, as a member from the prairies, from western Canada, from Saskatchewan, may I ask a question that is perhaps beyond the scope of the witnesses? I am referring to the five charts in the appendices on pages 1 to 5 dealing with percentage relationships of freight rates in various parts of Canada.

These charts cover only the period up to 1940. They indicate that on the prairies the charges are very much higher, percentage-wise, than in Quebec and Ontario or the maritimes. Could the witnesses tell me whether that same situation prevails now and would be shown if the charts were carried on past 1940? In other words, are the rates in the prairies considerably higher than those in Quebec, Ontario and the maritimes?

Mr. DICKSON: Madam Chairman, in answer to Mr. Pascoe's question—and undoubtedly someone from the west would be much more qualified to answer this than I—if we are speaking of class rates alone and a comparison of class rates, which these charts are, then the prairie rates shown on the charts have, since 1955, been on the same line as the Ontario and Quebec rates.

Mr. PASCOE: They carry right on along that same line?

Mr. DICKSON: That is right. Prairie class rates have been equal to Ontario and Quebec class rates.

It was one of the prairie provinces' handicaps that the members and those associated with transportation out there had as a perennial problem for years.

Class rates are equal now. I could not really speak with any authority on other types of rates.

Mr. PASCOE: I have one other question which follows from what Mr. Regan was saying, and I may perhaps read how one veteran engineer puts it in regard to Newfoundland, but it refers pretty well to the operation of railways all over:

Sometimes you are going uphill, and at the same time you are going downhill, and you can be going round three curves all at once.

I just put that on the record in referring to the cost of operation in this select region in comparison to the flat, level prairie land. It says here that it might be eight times as much. I am just asking, perhaps as an expression of opinion, whether the rates on the prairies should be high to maintain the higher cost of operations in other areas. That is just my western viewpoint and I would like to put it on the record.

Mr. STEWART: Madam Chairman, I have only two follow-up questions. The first is prompted by the questioning of Mr. Hahn. In the answer given to him it was pointed out that a federal government subsidy is paid to make up the difference between the rate that would normally apply and the rate which is in effect as a result of the Maritime Freight Rates Act.