

morrow we could have his opinion as to the importance he attaches to that question.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Of course I would like to hear him to-morrow.

The WITNESS: I have to be in Montreal to-morrow.

*By Right Hon. Mr. Meighen:*

Q. Would you have agreed charges if you had unification?—A. Here is the story about agreed charges. It is an inspiration which comes from Great Britain, as you know. It is an attempt by the Government to provide some protection for rail traffic against the unregulated traffic, on the highway in particular. I was a little suspicious of its effectiveness when it was first discussed, because I felt that it might be another means of competition between the two railways, and the Lord knows we have enough of that. But we agreed to act in respect of agreed charges through the Canadian Freight Association, which acts generally for the two railways. So the element of added competitive practices disappeared.

The reason I favour agreed charges—though they are still an experiment as far as this country is concerned—is that I believe they will enable the railways to have greater freedom in connection with unregulated truck competition. I understand that under this Transport Bill the water carriers are, in a measure, to be controlled and regulated between Montreal and Fort William—not as to bulk freight and certain other exceptions, but generally speaking; and I believe it will be a help to the railways to have it. I imagine it is the kind of thing they would ask for whether there is unified management or not, because there is nothing in unified management, except the strength of the railways, that affects our ability or the lack of it to compete with the highway.

*By Hon. Mr. Calder:*

Q. There would not be any necessity for it if the Federal Government had power to regulate?—A. If they were all under one transport control, I think we could take our chances and would know what we were competing with. We do not know to-day.

*By Hon. Mr. Sinclair:*

Q. They are under one control in Great Britain?—A. There are two or three tribunals. Whether they have the same functions as here, I do not know.

Hon. Mr. BLACK: They have there a central government which controls traffic over all the roads. We have not that in Canada.

*By Hon. Mr. Calder:*

Q. This is the only way you can see of getting any control over the trucks?—A. It is only giving the railways the right to meet the competition of the trucks.

Q. If the provinces had uniform regulations and tariffs—A. I would not be so anxious about it, because I think then we would get the control we need.

*By Right Hon. Mr. Meighen:*

Q. There is no system of agreed charges in the United States?—A. None.

*By Hon. Mr. Hugessen:*

Q. The Interstate Commerce Commission controls the truck traffic between the states?—A. Yes. They have a Motor Bill in the United States, for control and regulation, that is very comprehensive.

The CHAIRMAN (Hon. Mr. Beaubien): Is there anything further? Thank you, Sir Edward.

[Sir Edward Beatty, G.B.E.]