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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, ROOM 231,

June 20, 1934.

The Select Standing Committee on Railways and Shipping met at 11 o'clock, Mr. Chaplin, the Chairman, presiding.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, the Minister desires to explain two bills.

Hon. MR. MANION: Gentlemen, the two railways wrote me some time ago, and in a moment I will read the letter, and when I do so if you will transpose the words "express company" for "telegraph company" that will cover the letter in both cases. The Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National have got together and they want to unite into subsidiary companies their express companies and their telegraph companies—communications as they call them—as two separate companies. I will read one of the letters they have written to me, and the other is exactly the same except that it deals with the other question. This letter is signed by Mr. Fullerton and Mr. Beatty for their respective companies the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National, and it is addressed to me:—

We are enclosing herewith draft of Bill incorporating the Canadian Railway Express Company which our companies desire to have passed at the present session of parliament as a means of implementing the recommendation of the Royal Commission on transportation respecting the conduct of express business of the two companies.

You will observe that the proposed legislation is simply the incorporation of the new company with the requisite powers to carry on the express business of the two companies if, as and when the trustees of the Canadian National and the directors of the Canadian Pacific determine that this should be done.

We regard it as essential that the legislation should be passed at the earliest possible moment in order to expedite whatever measures of economy and efficiency our two companies may jointly decide should be adopted.

This is signed by Mr. Fullerton and Mr. Beatty. The same letter refers also to the communications company except it is communications instead of express.

MR. PRICE: What is the date?

Hon. MR. MANION: The date is June 5. As a matter of fact it should, probably, have been dealt with at the last meeting of the committee, but I will tell you why it was not: I wanted to have this put through as a private bill of their own, with nothing to do with the government. We had given them the powers last year to do just what they are doing, and this is all under the Act. I can read the clause out of the Act, and I will read it. Clause 16 reads as follows—this deals with co-operation between the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways:—

Without restricting the generality of the foregoing any such measures, plans or arrangements may include and be effected by means of,—

(a) New companies controlled by stock ownership, equitably apportioned between the companies.