

Mr. WALSH: Your suggestion was—

Mr. FAIRWEATHER: I repeat that after careful investigation it developed that the interference which might be considered as serious has not turned out to be so serious. Now, as a matter of fact, the common impression is that most of the trains reach Montreal from the west. That is far from being true. There are a great many more trains on the Canadian National which reach Montreal by crossing the St. Lawrence river, including the Montreal and Southern Counties railway, and every one of those trains has to cross the Lachine canal now. The actual increased burden that is placed upon the canal crossing does not amount to very much when you look at it in the perspective of all the traffic.

Mr. WALSH: What are the relative figures in connection with that statement?

Mr. FAIRWEATHER: When we talk of the crossings of the canal I would say they would be probably in the ratio of about one to six.

Mr. WALSH: Six trains from the south against one from the west.

Mr. FAIRWEATHER: Six crossings of the canal from the Victoria bridge end to one that would be added at St. Henri by this particular move. The reason for this is as I said that there are more trains crossing the St. Lawrence river at Victoria bridge than there are at St. Anne's. That is true because of the Montreal and the Southern Counties.

Mr. WALSH: Does that include the Montreal and Southern Counties?

Mr. FAIRWEATHER: Yes.

Mr. WALSH: Montreal, St. Lambert, and so on.

Mr. FAIRWEATHER: Yes, but they are all crossings. Now, there are also, from an engineering standpoint, certain alleviating features. The present crossing of the canal by the Montreal and Southern Counties railways is by a swing bridge, and it is slow, whereas the crossing of the canal which is proposed is going to be by means of the most modern type of lift bridge which will minimize the time of interference of trains and canal carriers. I am satisfied, after having made a careful study of it, that at the present volume of traffic there will be no noticeable interference to trains arriving and departing in the central station. It must be kept in mind, too, that for five months of the year there is no interference whatever because the canal is frozen up, and also that for a period in the spring when the canal is officially open the traffic on it is very light, so that the actual time at which this interference might be considered to be serious, when you spread it over the year, does not constitute a serious factor. And again I want to emphasize that after a careful and detailed study of these canal crossings it is my considered judgment that canal carriers are not going to find their traffic interfered with materially and passengers arriving and departing by the Canadian National railway terminal are not going to be seriously interfered with either. Many of you who have come into Montreal on the Maritime Express or the Ocean Limited or by any train on the Canadian National railway that brought you into the city from south of the St. Lawrence river—did you suffer any noticeable delay at the canal? It is one of those things where we have facilities, transportation facilities, which to a degree come in conflict, and it needs a certain amount of intelligent control, signalling apparatus and mutual accommodations. I do submit that the Canadian National Railways would never think for one moment of subjecting its passenger traffic to a serious delay by these canal crossings, and it was for that reason that the idea was very carefully examined; and I do submit that the result of a careful examination like that, based upon the experience of the Canadian National in this canal crossing situation, is something that needs to be given consideration.

Of course, I have qualified—I want to qualify my statement by saying that if passenger traffic, and particularly if the freight traffic increases to a point where the capacity of that line of railway (between St. Henri and Victoria