

Cost of Living

The second evil which is resulting from this government policy is the discouragement of producers because of the uncertainty of prices and markets. Within the last two years we have seen the discouragement of the production of such commodities as hogs, poultry, dairy products and beef. Someone will say that surely there should be no discouragement of the production of beef with prices so high at the present time; but the fact is that many people in my constituency are fearful of going into the production of beef because they fear that prices will collapse. There is only one way whereby we can guarantee stability of prices and stability of cost of production so as to assure the producer that he will have a chance of making good in production, and that is by the wise use of subsidies.

The third evil which is weighing upon my constituents and upon my province is the result of strikes which come from these high costs of living. These strikes force up prices. Nowadays strikes are never allowed to materialize when they can possibly be prevented, but prices are raised nevertheless. The consumer is paying for these strikes. Prices are rising and thereby indirectly affecting the welfare of the producer. Something must be done and done soon.

The fourth evil is of such a nature that by reason of that evil, in the first place, the ordinary consumers are penalized for living in Alberta; in the second place, Alberta's primary producers are inequitably handicapped as compared with the producers in other provinces in the dominion; in the third place, the ordinary economic development within Alberta is impeded more than is the case in any other province; in the fourth place, interprovincial trade between Alberta and British Columbia is hampered most inequitably as compared with what obtains throughout the rest of Canada; and, in the fifth place, a tariff wall in effect has been erected against Alberta in reference to the other provinces of Canada.

Those five ills may appear difficult to prove, but if I had the opportunity and time, which probably I have not today, I could support each of those charges to the complete satisfaction of everyone in the house and in the country.

Let all discrimination as between the central provinces and the maritimes and the western provinces be removed in respect of this fourth evil which results from the failure to use subsidies. Then let subsidies be employed to bring about an equitable and stable freight rate structure throughout Canada. The

fourth evil which I have been discussing results from the failure to use subsidies to overcome inequitable freight rates.

These freight rates have already been the cause of the most grievous disadvantage to people in the west and the maritimes. We have seen three increases in freight rates and we are now faced with a tremendous effort to raise freight rates again. All of these raises are in addition to the inequitable structure which obtained in the first place. We are threatened with strikes for increased wages which the railroads tell us will increase their costs to such an extent that freight rates will have to be raised again. Where on earth is this thing going to end?

The time has come when something should be done about this matter. It may possibly be that the railroads are not getting enough revenue. If that is the case there is no reason why more than a fair share should be taken out of the four western provinces. The time has come when something should be done to arrive at an equitable and reasonable freight rate structure to be charged all over the Dominion of Canada on a similar per ton mile basis. As matters are now, we are continuing in a chaotic manner and it would appear that nothing the provinces are able to do will change this.

I suggest that if the railroads simply must have additional revenue then they should be given that revenue by means of subsidies toward which everyone in Canada would contribute. As matters are at the present time the inequalities which make up the fourth evil I have been discussing, freight rates, now bear heavily upon the province of Alberta, and that province is not the only province in the west that is suffering.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Dion in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

111. Departmental administration, \$418,340.

Item stands.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

133. Departmental administration, \$270,421.

Item stands.

Progress reported.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

CONSOLIDATION AND REVISION OF EXISTING LEGISLATION—ORGANIZATION FOR DEFENCE—CODE OF SERVICE, DISCIPLINE, ETC.

Hon. Brooke Claxton (Minister of National Defence) moved the second reading of Bill No. 133, respecting national defence.