

*Freight Rates*

Minister of Labour refused to carry out that recommendation. So I submit that the tears which have been shed in the house over the workers on these railways are indeed crocodile tears.

As to this whole question of the relationship, which I contend does not exist, between the present demands of the workers for increased wages and the demand of the companies for increased freight rates, I should like to quote from documents that I have before me at the present time. I have here a copy of a brief submitted on behalf of a long list of railway employee organizations to the conciliation board in support of their request for an increase of thirty-five cents an hour in the basic rates of pay. The document which I have in my hand was submitted by employee organizations mainly connected with the Canadian Pacific Railway. I also have a brief submitted by the Canadian brotherhood of railway employees whose members are employed by the Canadian National Railways.

I feel that these employees made out a strong case for these increases. They made a good case with respect to the employees in the so-called upper brackets by comparing their wages with the wages received by employees in other similar lines of endeavour, but they made an even stronger case by pointing out that there are thousands of employees on the railroads who are not in the upper brackets. In particular I would refer to the information to be found on pages 42 and 43 of this brief where reference is made to the large number of labourers and freight handlers getting as low as seventy-six cents an hour and, in some cases, only sixty-seven cents an hour.

Many of these employees have been in the service of their company for a long time, and at the same time they see advertisements by other plants for unskilled employment at rates of 87½ cents, 95 cents an hour and so on. The details are set out in the brief. The point I am making at this moment is that I support wholeheartedly the contention of the railway employees that an increase is coming to them and should be granted without delay. In my view they made an excellent case when they appeared before the conciliation board.

Mr. CHEVRIER: I wonder if we could have some order in this debate? The hon. gentleman is now discussing a matter which in my opinion, and with deference to you, sir, is outside the scope of this debate. He did start to discuss a matter which I think was in order, but he is now going into the railway wage rates and making attacks on the Canadian National Railways because of the wages they pay certain of their employees. I am not objecting to that

[Mr. Knowles.]

if the hon. member wants to do it, but this is not the place to do it. This is a debate on a specific question, and I submit to you, sir, with deference that the hon. member should direct his remarks to the debate.

Mr. KNOWLES: Mr. Speaker, I would point out that it was the minister himself who brought into this debate the question of wage rates. I feel that I have just as much right to answer him as he had to bring up the question.

Mr. CHEVRIER: I am not going to allow the hon. gentleman to get away with a statement like that. Today he has been putting on *Hansard* several statements which are erroneous. Any remarks which I made did not deal with specific cases such as the hon. gentleman has referred to; they dealt with the general case. I do not think the hon. gentleman wants to say that I did otherwise, but if he does I shall take issue with him.

Mr. KNOWLES: I should like to know the facts which I am putting on the record which the minister regards as being erroneous. I have quoted from a brief presented to the conciliation board by the railway employee organizations. However I had finished with that point when the minister interrupted and I was moving on to another point with which he may also take issue.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Let us get on with the debate if you do not mind.

Mr. KNOWLES: Apparently what I am saying is hitting the minister.

Mr. CHEVRIER: It is drawing a red herring across the trail.

An hon. MEMBER: Let us get on with the debate.

Mr. KNOWLES: I think the Minister of Transport is the last one to talk about a red herring in this debate, especially after the performance in which he indulged the other day.

Mr. CHEVRIER: If you would listen to your own leader over the radio you would see what red herrings are being drawn across the trail.

Mr. KNOWLES: May I turn to another phase of this question? I submit that this matter will be in order, although the Minister of Transport may not like it. The railway employee organizations took up fifteen pages of the brief to which I have referred in order to point out that their request for increased wages must not be regarded as being con-