

freight borne by shippers, the cost of imports laid down at Churchill, and in general the profits or the savings of operating the route. The trend of the insurance rates over the years has been downwards, accompanied by some extension of the limits of the season. The number of ships since 1931 has not provided an adequate actuarial basis for arriving at a lower rate. Full use of the port for one season would provide that. The imperial shipping committee in its report of July 19, 1939, stated:

Except in the matter of salvage it is the view of the committee that the Hudson bay route need not be considered as more risky than the St. Lawrence.

And the report added:

... in consultation with our chairman, the joint Hull committee ... have agreed that if some twenty cargoes in all are brought away from Churchill in 1939 and no serious loss occurs, they will be prepared to give favourable consideration to the question of recommending a further reduction in 1940 from the rates of premium chargeable in 1939."

But, as hon. members will remember, in 1940 we were engaged in a still more serious matter, and the ships en route to Churchill were diverted in another direction. It is, however, reasonable to assume that the principle of the statement which I have just read still applies, and will have weight if twenty or more ships enter the bay in 1947, which is the thing for which I am pleading in this particular address.

The fact that the route never did have a proper test to capacity has left many problems unsolved, and has prevented the accumulation of accurate data for future guidance. The equipment at the port necessary for efficient operation was not complete until 1936, and during the war years the whole plans for operating the port for the exporting of grain were shelved. Then came the operations of 1946 which I have described as being too puny a test upon which to base any reasoned judgment.

The rail freight rates at which wheat will be hauled to Churchill has a distinct bearing on this whole question. Should wheat coming down the Canadian National railway on a long-haul rate be saddled with a heavier rate when it reaches The Pas? We must have an extension of the import-export rate to The Pas-Churchill track. Is the full-time salary of a general manager all charged against the operations of the Hudson Bay railroad? If it is, should it be? Is the Canadian National railway encouraging or discouraging the use of the Hudson Bay railroad? It is because the farmers of western Canada do not know the answers to such questions that the united

farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan section, asked by resolution that a royal commission be set up to find the answers.

Mr. CHEVRIER: If the hon. gentleman will permit an interruption, the answers to these questions can be obtained when the committee on railways and shipping is sitting. I do not want to interrupt the hon. gentleman, but surely he must know that such information can be obtained from that committee.

Mr. COLDWELL: The hon. member has a right to make his speech.

Mr. KNIGHT: There are some other points about operations at the bay which such a commission might look into, or which might be revealed by the use to full capacity which I advocate. I have picked these at random, and they are not necessarily in the order of importance. Is there anyone whose job it is to canvass traffic for this road? Are the necessary minor repairs at the port being made? Did the Americans use or remove or destroy any equipment, and on what terms? If so, has such equipment been replaced? What are the labour conditions at the port? Are the stevedores efficient? Are the living conditions in bunkhouses adequate? Is there proper and convenient sanitary accommodation at the dock itself? I would draw the minister's attention to the last phrase, "at the dock itself."

Mr. CHEVRIER: In reply, I would say to the hon. gentleman that the information he has requested can be obtained from the committee on railways and shipping.

Mr. KNIGHT: I shall make up my mind, Mr. Speaker, not to ask any more questions of the minister.

Are the operators, including the key men imported from Montreal, enthusiastic about the success of Churchill? Personally, if I may say so, I do not see why the minister should be on the defensive in regard to this whole question.

Mr. CHEVRIER: I am not on the defensive; I am simply indicating to the hon. gentleman where he can obtain the information.

Mr. KNIGHT: Thank you.

Mr. HEON: Apparently the minister is on the offensive.

Mr. KNIGHT: Well, he is not so offensive after all. What tests have been made of the gyro compass, of radar, of loran—long-range navigation aids? Perhaps in some respects mention of those will answer the question the minister asked me some time ago. What