

feeders. Thus they would secure an effective highway control which is not possible under this Bill because of provincial jurisdiction. In my opinion, if such an arrangement could be reached it would enure to the great advantage of the provinces.

I believe the day will come when the Federal Government will have to move along the line indicated, and in doing so it would be only following the practice of other countries. It has been done already in the United States. Only a few days ago Great Britain took over some 3,000 or 4,000 miles of county roads and constituted them national highways. The same sort of thing has been done in Germany and France. I repeat, some day our Federal Government will of necessity have to take similar action for the accommodation of the people of this Dominion. In this way we shall eventually bring about unified control of road transportation.

But all this Bill seeks to do is to secure control of interprovincial and international road traffic. That is as far as the Minister is prepared to go. Indeed, he cannot go further at the present time. He has told the Railway Committee that he does not intend to interfere in any way with provincial rights. If we pass this Bill we shall have done something to bring this great public utility to a certain extent under federal control, and it will have the effect of bringing about more uniform conditions throughout Canada in regard to highway traffic.

I am not a member of the Railway Committee, but I attended many of its sessions and listened to the arguments advanced for and against the Bill. Yesterday some of my honourable friends opposite said that, except the representatives of the railways, nobody appeared before the committee in favour of the Bill. That was not my observation. Representatives of three shipping companies engaged in running regular package freight schedules on the lakes gave evidence. At the outset they said they were opposed to regulation. Two weeks later they came back and said, "We have gone into this matter very carefully and 75 per cent of us are in favour of the regulation proposed in the Bill."

Hon. Mr. SHARPE: Those three companies represented 75 per cent of the lake shippers. All the small companies were against the Bill.

Hon. Mr. KING: I am speaking of the shipping companies that came before the committee, and I think that is a fair statement of their attitude. If the other companies did not appear, it was just too bad for them. Those shipping companies told us that on account of the uncontrolled rate

situation to-day unprofitable contracts were being made and the business was being destroyed. The committee was also informed that if the jitney or cut-throat competition continued on the Great Lakes the shipping companies would become bankrupt. If we accept that statement, may we not assume that if those companies become bankrupt the business will be reorganized? But it will be reorganized not on a bankrupt basis, but on a basis for profit.

Hon. Mr. LAIRD: Higher rates.

Hon. Mr. KING: Yes, higher rates, if necessary. If any honourable member thinks the business can be run on a bankrupt basis he is out of touch with modern shipping conditions. As I say, in the event of bankruptcy the business will be reorganized for profit. This being so, why should not those engaged in the carriage of our wheat be controlled, just as our railways are controlled? Why should they not agree to carry this great natural product at agreed rates? My honourable friend from Vancouver (Hon. Mr. McRae) says that to adopt the principle of agreed rates is simply to go back to the Dark Ages. The agreed rate is probably the maximum rate to be established. The maximum rate is known.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: No, no.

Hon. Mr. KING: Just a moment. I want to make this clear. What my honourable friend from Vancouver (Hon. Mr. McRae) had in mind was this: that the large producer could go to a railway company and say, "I want to move a large quantity of timber, and I want a special rate," and an agreed rate could be given to him. But once it was given it would become applicable to every man engaged in that business. It is a published rate; it is known. The agreed rate on the lakes should not cause any great apprehension in this House or in the House of Commons. It will be a rate regulated under the authority of the Transport Commission.

We heard yesterday a great outcry about what was going to happen the wheat farmer. I remember that in 1923 or 1924, when wheat was selling at \$1.50 or \$2 a bushel, there arose on the Great Lakes a situation in which the Government intervened because rates were too high. An Act was passed, but as rates came down it was never put into operation. Can anyone tell me why those engaged in handling this great product should not come under the authority of some board—a federal board—which would regulate their rates? In every municipality in this country the principle of regulation is applied to transportation and other public utilities.