

There is a disadvantage as far as we are concerned in the location and in the volume of traffic. The article goes on:

—which is just the nub of the region's problem—so there's no help there. But a phrase has been added to provide that the act is not to be interpreted to permit any "undue obstruction...to the movement of commodities through Canadian ports."

We are glad therefore to have that assurance. However, there is no definite assurance in the bill that the Atlantic provinces will not suffer through their location and their volume of traffic. This editorial is quite a long one but I should like to read another paragraph from it, if I may.

The section of the act that may yet time-bomb Maritime ports and industry is Section 334, which will require the railways to charge "compensatory" rates on all traffic. It would be possible for such rates to push freight costs so high that even Maritime Freight Rates Act subsidies would not bring them down within competitive reach in relation to other regions. Meanwhile, the federal government is spending millions of dollars each winter on St. Lawrence River ice-breaking, is planning to spend \$100 million for improvements to the St. Lawrence route, and is spending further millions to subsidize the St. Lawrence Seaway.

So we are left hoping that the new Maritime deal promised after the transportation study will be a fair deal. And while we wait to find out, the weapon that could destroy us will be primed and ready, and its name is "compensatory freight rates."

Honourable senators, perhaps I should apologize for placing so much emphasis on this situation, but I feel that it is very important and that we are as much, if not more, concerned than other people in Canada in this new bill.

We may not be as good at putting up a fight as those from western Canada. I remember the debate on the Crowsnest Pass. They called it their charter. I congratulate them on having succeeded, though I do not know what was the particular danger.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: The Magna Carta.

Hon. Mr. Brooks: It does not go back quite as far as that, but it goes back to 1897, which
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is far enough. It brings to my mind that some years ago when I first entered politics I attended a meeting in a little country school. The main speaker took most of the time discussing the Crowsnest Pass. I do not think he knew anything about it but at that time it was politics, as it has been politics for a great many years. He harangued the audience and I listened to him, trying to learn something. I did not learn very much regarding it. In any event, near the end of his speech, he asked, "What are we going to do about this Crowsnest Pass?" Some fellow at the back of the hall, who may have been drinking something stronger than tea, shouted, "We will shoot the damn crow and tear the nest down."

Having listened to the western members in the other place the other day, it seemed to me that anyone who tries to shoot their crow or tear their nest down would have a difficult task. As I was brought up on a farm, I know that a crow is a pretty hard bird to shoot, for he can look after himself very well and keep out of the way.

Honourable senators, I have little more to say, as there are other members who will speak on this bill and will go over other sections of it and bring up points which I have not been able to touch.

I hope and trust that the new 17-man commission will be composed of outstanding persons who will understand the problems of all parts of Canada. I hope that in their deliberations they will assure equity for all parts and have regard for all Canadians. I hope they will show good judgment in deciding, for instance, on the abandonment of branch lines, that those abandoned will be those not needed and those retained will be needed in the public interest and for the public good.

I hope that careful consideration will be given to these so-called compensatory rates.

Honourable senators, I may say that I am in favour of the bill. I believe it holds tremendous possibilities for the future of our transportation. There are possibilities in it for good or evil, but I feel that those appointed on this commission will do justice to all parts of the country.

Honourable senators, before I resume my seat, may I say I was pleased to hear the honourable sponsor of the bill (Hon. Mr. Deschatelets) say that he would move later that this bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications. This brings to my mind the former chairman of that committee. I was pleased to