

That is all I have to say, gentlemen; and, as I said before, it is merely suggested and does not necessitate any action upon the part of this committee; but I have felt, as one who had at heart the interests of the country, I should make that suggestion.

Hon. Mr. MANION: May I ask a question, Mr. Euler, I think, really covered it, but I would like to make sure what you have in the back of your head. Your suggestion is that a commission of business men should be appointed to look into the whole transportation question, not only of the Canadian National Railways but the Canadian Pacific Railway, all the transportation question, in this country, including both railways.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: I think, if I might be so impertinent as to suggest the terms of reference to such a committee,—and while I said business men, I did not necessarily mean business men alone; I think there should be included in such a committee economists, those who can contribute useful thought upon the subject. Business men have no monopoly of intelligence.

Hon. Mr. MANION: Those of us who are not business men will agree with that.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: One sometimes finds intelligence buried in the halls of education, and you sometimes find a lot of intelligence with the track labourer, and now and then there happens to be a friend who comes forward and accuses railway employees of having intelligence. One never can tell.

To continue with what the Minister has said, I think if anything is done the terms of reference should be sufficiently broad to permit a committee of this sort to ventilate the whole subject completely, and that they ought to have a pretty free hand to go into anything that in their judgment relates to the welfare of the country from a transportation point of view.

Mr. HANSON: Would you include in the terms of reference the cost of operating railways on this continent?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: That would have to be within the terms of such a reference. I doubt if any such committee could come to any conclusion without taking that into consideration.

The railway transportation problem is born of the fact that we in Canada produce in the aggregate the thing which represents our greatest activity in the centre of the country, an average of probably two thousand miles away from the port from which that production must move if it is to be sold to the outside world; and our success in Canada is going to depend upon the difference between what it costs us to produce and what it costs us to sell; in other words, taken as a business enterprise, the success of our business enterprise, which we will call for the moment Canada, depends upon what is the spread between our cost of production and the price at which we sell that production to the outer world; in other words, the balance of trade.

Mr. GEARY: Would you indicate any point toward which that committee should direct its efforts?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: No, Colonel.

Mr. DUFF: I would suggest that the Board of Directors of the Canadian National Railways should do that instead of appointing a committee.

Mr. FRASER: How about the Canadian Pacific Railways?

Mr. DUFF: Oh, I see,—the two railways?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: I would say, Mr. Duff, that I hope there are enough individuals in this country who would be useful and acceptable members of such a committee to perform that service as a patriotic contribution, without pay. I was not for a moment suggesting anything else.

Mr. HANBURY: That is a detail.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: As Mr. Hanbury says, that is a detail.