

care of by one system and much more cheaply than by two. The unreasonable—the indifferent thinkers—are unconsciously an expense to the country. Some of them would take a ten pound parcel to a railway and expect a "special" sent out with it. And it is that attitude that starts two lines competing in extra services and for which the people as a whole must pay.

Well, how would I group these public and private lines? If I could close my eyes to the net-work of private lines in Canada, I might say, let us have a great national trunk line, from east to west across the continent, with minimum freights for maintenance, thereby carrying out our non-revenue canal policy, and have the private lines as feeders. But with the situation that exists today, that seems quite impossible. We might, however, apply that principle to the existing National Transcontinental and use it as a winter road for certain classes of freight, in that way bringing the winter rates nearer to those—lake and rail—that prevail in summer, and allowing as far as possible the business of the country to flow freely throughout the entire year. This latter, it seems to me, must be an essential in Canada.

I trust my remarks will not have led you to think that I fail to appreciate the fact that Canada has the greatest railway system in the world. It has its faults, so have we all. It is a great credit to this country. Nor am I advancing the idea that national lines are better than private ones. I merely hold that one great system gives the greatest opportunity for the greatest good to the country; that the dividend feature in the private corporation, precludes the fullest consideration being at all times given to the development of the country's commerce and industry; that Canada's peculiar physical conditions may yet demand railway rates that the dividend paying corporation may be quite loath to consider.

There is a feature of railway operating policy, as we have it on this continent, that I seriously question as being sound, and which we would not have under a nationalized railway system. It is this, the method of developing a few trade centres which to me, it seems, in some cases, are carried to an excess. If a powerful railway corporation, today sets out to create a traffic terminal it at once draws from other centres in the surrounding district. Your City of Winnipeg happens to be a terminal, but its situation as the gateway to the west makes it a natural one. The Railway Company as a highly organized institution, thinking largely of the earning of dividends, has in that way aided and abetted in the destruction of a proper equilibrium between the city and the country. We know it is better for one of our western provinces to have at the present time ten healthy centres of 10,000 each than only one of 100,000. In recent years, the Board of Railway Commissioners has been exercising a reasonable and fair control over our railway corporations, not that I suggest railways have