

*Transportation Policies*

transportation facilities; the unfair aspects of the block system, which has been set up mainly to assist in the export trade and which militates against the maintenance of adequate supplies of feed grains for the domestic producers in the province of British Columbia; and the inadequate provision of modern rail cars.

Hopper cars are used for the transport of grains for export, and we believe they should be used in the domestic feed grain industry as well because they are needed there. Unfortunately the industry is left using the outmoded equipment which has been replaced by the modern hopper car for the export trade.

We think also of the inequitable application of demurrage charges, which are applied to domestic grain but not to the movement of export grain on the west coast. Finally there are the unequal transportation rates on the movement of feed grains as compared with export grains. These have been stated very clearly on many occasions.

I should like to point out the comparative rail freight costs for shipping grain from Regina, Saskatchewan, to Ottawa, 1,652 miles, is \$16.40 per ton or 99 cents per ton mile; Regina, Saskatchewan, to Sherbrooke, Quebec, 1,865 miles, is \$18.60 or a cents per ton mile of \$1; Regina, Saskatchewan, to Truro, Nova Scotia, 2,408 miles, is \$20.20, or 84 cents per ton mile; Vulcan, Alberta, to Vancouver, British Columbia, 711 miles, is \$18.40, or a cents per ton mile of \$2.59 for domestic grain; and Vulcan, Alberta, to Vancouver, British Columbia, 711 miles, is \$4.20, or 59 cents per ton mile for export grain.

The export movements have the benefit of the Crowsnest rates to Thunder Bay and water competitive rates beyond. On westbound shipments the Crow rates apply only to export grain. Thus we find the industry in British Columbia is strenuously opposing the paying of more freight on domestic grains to Vancouver. When we put these figures together, we see the industry in British Columbia is faced with a great many problems and a great many factors which militate against the maintenance of a viable industry in that province.

One example of freight inequity may be cited in the transportation of the finished product, for example, chicken—east versus west. The rates supplied by the British Columbia Broiler Marketing Board, which I believe are for 1974 and are comparable to the present time, are 7.85 cents per pound of chicken from Vancouver to Montreal versus 2.99 cents per pound of chicken from Montreal to Vancouver. When this is converted into terms of grains required to produce this pound of chicken, we come up with a relative rate of \$8.30 per ton of grain in the form of chicken coming west versus \$21.82 going east. That indicates how much we are out of line in endeavouring to move our products from the west to the east, as against the movement of similar products from the east to the west. This has caused a great deal of dissension, a great deal of antagonism, and a great deal of alienation in western Canada—the unfair freight rates which exist on goods sent east versus the rates on goods transported west.

**Mr. Benjamin:** It is uphill both ways.

[Mr. Patterson.]

**Mr. Patterson:** Yes, it is uphill both ways, as far as western Canada is concerned.

I should like to make reference to a communication I received from the B.C. Livestock Producers Co-operative Association which has to do with the livestock industry. This letter reads:

We were most concerned last fall when proposed freight rate changes were proposed for an increase of 11 per cent for B.C. . . .

The letter refers to various increases, but a flat rate was agreed upon. It continues:

Of equal importance and concern to us, is the availability of rolling stock for livestock shipping during the fall. Since we are the western terminus in so far as eastern shipments are concerned during the heavy shipments of western feeders to Ontario, it is sometimes difficult to obtain sufficient numbers of cars.

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Here again there is a shortage of transportation facilities and rolling stock for livestock shipped to market.

The letter continues:

I understand that there has not been a livestock car built since 1947 for an industry that has almost doubled in numbers since that time.

It is indeed puzzling to note the thousands of cars built with federal funds for the grain industry and the potato industry in the maritimes, but not for Canada's third largest industry.

All of this has to do with the agricultural economy in British Columbia. I could go on to refer to freight rates as they affect other industries in British Columbia, such as the lumber industry. Here again this industry faces insurmountable obstacles in marketing its products, such as inadequacy of rolling stock. Many times it is unable to obtain the required transportation facilities to keep one of the greatest industries in the province of British Columbia going.

I had a situation develop locally not too long ago concerning discrimination resulting from a CPR-induced boxcar shortage. It occurred in an area of my riding, Mission, where rolling stock was unavailable. A telegram was sent to the president of the Canadian Transport Commission which read as follows:

Sir, we in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia are experiencing an extremely dire situation in regards to boxcar supply. We feel CPR is discriminating against us because of what they refer to as an unfavourable economic situation. We would ask you for your immediate intervention on our behalf. We have forwarded a complete brief by registered mail.

The company concerned also contacted their member of parliament and, I believe, another member of parliament from British Columbia. Representations were made and the matter was resolved, but here again we have a case where a small company is endeavouring to carry on its operations and expand an industry within the community, yet is faced with discrimination and is unable to move its products.

I am very happy to have had the opportunity tonight of speaking to this motion because, as I have already pointed out, I believe the problem is not a question of geography but rather one of inadequate transportation policies which have worked to the detriment of the agricultural industry of British Columbia as well as of other industries. As I have said, there are inadequate facilities provided to move products to market and