

THE PRIME MINISTER: Is the same language used?

HON. MR. OLIVER: Not exactly the same language, but the effect is the same.

HON. MR. FIELDING: Down east they are raising this same question with regard to rates.

HON. MR. OLIVER: I do not know about that, but I will say this, Mr. Fielding: while I cannot give the exact words, the impression in my mind is very definite, because I examined the phraseology for the very purpose of making a comparison. My firm conviction is, without any reservation whatever, that British Columbia under the terms of union is in identically the same position in regard to the railway mentioned in the terms of union as Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are in connection with the Inter-colonial railway.

There is one point I overlooked in connection with the Act of 1872. The preamble to that Act recites that the construction of this railway is for the closer union of the provinces. Now, I am not going to say anything at all of an exaggerated character, but I want to tell you gentlemen here and now that in western Canada -- I am speaking from what I have been told in regard to the prairie provinces, but I know it as regards British Columbia -- in the western provinces of Canada there is a feeling in the minds of the people that they have not had fair treatment; that they are being charged excessive freight rates both in the prairies and in British Columbia, to the advantage of the people of eastern Canada. And if you want an instance of that, I will give you one that was brought to my attention just since I have been in Ottawa. There is a large manufacturing industry in the city of Vancouver. Under a judgment of the Railway Board in 1908 they had a rate on their eastward movement; Montreal had her rate on the westward movement, and the two rates met at Portage la Prairie. The question of the justice of these rates came up in 1914, and the judgment of the Railway Board was re-affirmed that that was the proper meeting place for these two rates, east and west. Then the Board met again in 1918 and put the Vancouver industry back to Regina; and the man who confirmed the judgment of 1908 in 1914, Sir Henry Drayton, was the man who varied in 1918, when the conditions were identically the same.

HON. MR. FIELDING: What had Sir Henry Drayton to do with it?

HON. MR. OLIVER: He was then Chairman of the Board of Railway Commissioners. There is a specific instance.

HON. MR. MURDOCK: Was not the underlying question involved there the proper allocation of sugar for distribution in Canada, and was it not for the purpose of ensuring that the eastern sugar refiners should be permitted to utilize all the territory as far west as Regina and that the British Columbia sugar refiners should take care of the rest of the territory?

Hon.

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