

the week, I think probably we should deal with this question now so that it is looked after at the present time. As I say, gentlemen, we have a motion before us. What is your pleasure? All those in favour?

Motion agreed to, Mr. Chevrier opposing.

The CHAIRMAN: We now call Bill C-38, an act to make provision for the revision of certain class and commodity rates on freight traffic. On clause 1 of the bill I would like to introduce the minister who, I know, does not need any introduction.

Mr. FISHER: Mr. Chairman, before you continue I wish to make a special request to the committee with regard to a witness from Port Arthur and one from Fort William—in effect, from northwestern Ontario. As some of the members may be aware, it has been the pattern in the past whenever there have been any freight rate hearings, for eight provinces to have official representatives, and Ontario has never had any official representation.

This has been a cause of some concern in our particular area, and we tend to be a block that is outside the normal freight rate structure and the rest of Ontario and Quebec. For that reason, on only one hearing in recent years have we had a representation. Mr. Badanai, the member from Fort William, and I have arranged for two people to come here and give the views of the lakehead region.

The special consideration I am asking is that the committee approve of Mr. Badanai and I calling those people as witnesses. That will enable the committee, through its channels, to pay for the travelling expenses of these gentlemen. This is a special consideration and it is something that is not uncommon to committees; but I wanted to advance the point and ask for cooperation from the other members. I do it because I feel we definitely have a special situation in our particular region, both in the past and probably in the future. That is why I make this request. I would like to move that the committee allow the member for Port Arthur to call two witnesses before this committee.

Mr. DRYSDALE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if Mr. Fisher could explain what testimony the witnesses will be giving and who the witnesses are, because we are, in a sense, setting a precedent.

We have two witnesses from British Columbia, and I am sure they would be interested in a similar consideration. I think the committee should know who these witnesses are and the type of evidence they will be giving.

Mr. FISHER: One is the chairman of the transportation committee, as I understand, of the northwestern Ontario chamber of commerce, and the other is a gentleman on that committee who has been specifically interested in the wood, pulp and paper industry. One is Mr. E. G. Charnock and the other is Mr. H. Styffe.

Mr. CHOWN: Are there any other witnesses from Ontario?

The CHAIRMAN: There is Mr. Magee from Ottawa; and Mr. Wallace from Toronto—the Canadian transport tariff bureau—has a watching brief. Is there anyone else?

Mr. BELL (*Saint John-Albert*): I think it would be a very dangerous precedent to start this. Although I sympathize with those who find themselves in a particular situation, I would think that the special interest that Mr. Fisher mentions could apply to anyone anywhere in Canada. I think we would be leaving ourselves open. I know we have one gentleman here from the maritimes who has a watching brief, or is following the proceedings. But I know even down there we have a difficult job getting agreement on our particular problems. And if the thing was opened up in the way suggested,