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RAILWAY RATES DISCUSSED BY GERRY McGEER

Specialist Answers Number of
Criticisms and States Why
B.C. Claim is Just

PUNCTURES STATEMENTS

Comparisons With American
Farmer Discussed and Fal-
lacy of Railway Argu-
ments Shown

By G. G. McGeer in "The
Bulllein"

In recent issues of the Vancouver Bulletin P. A. O'Farrell has said a great deal about Canada's transportation problem.

He assails all those who dare to suggest that freight rates are too high. He is particularly caustic in his criticism of the Manitoba Free Press because of its support of the Grow's Nest rates on grain and flour. He denounces the right of parliament to fix rates upon any commodity and deplores the fact that the Canadian farmer is not paying as much for his transportation as the American farmer is paying. He declares against a fallacy that recognizes the necessity of reasonably low rates on grain and flour in the West and alleges that such a policy can only be carried out at the expense of other parts of Canada and to the detriment of the railways.

Damns Farmer

Mr. O'Farrell damns any consideration to the Western farmer but shrieks to high heaven for continued protection for the



board of railway commissioners, functioning as it has functioned in hundreds of cases through its chief commissioner and one other commissioner, the number which constituted a quorum of the board, fully investigated the question of discrimination as between the movement of grain to Fort William and to Vancouver, and decided there should be no discrimination and that Pacific coast ports were entitled to equal treatment in the matter of grain rates. A quorum, may I point out to Mr. O'Farrell, is never a minority of the court. When a quorum of the court sits that constitutes the court.

What is the principle established by parliament and by the decision of the board of railway commissioners?

- 1 That the maxima rates agreed to by the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1897 are today just as essential to the success of the grain producer in Canada, who must find a market for his produce in world markets, as they were in 1897, and
- 2 The Board of Railway Commissioners have established that the rates as fixed are profitable and paying rates within themselves.

The American Comparison

Mr. O'Farrell quotes a number of comparisons as between American rates and presumably draws from them the conclusion that the Canadian farmer is much better off than the American farmer. To some extent his ratio comparisons would justify that conclusion. Yet the position of the American farmer is far from happy. Wheat growing in Montana has not been successful. Wheat growing in the Dakotas is a doubtful proposition today despite the fact that the average length of haul to the markets that consume the bulk of the American farmers' grain is much shorter than that which the Canadian grain producer is confronted with, and despite an enormously high tariff protection that the American farmer receives. Recent declarations by Americans who know state the position of the American farmer to be the worst in the history of America.

Parliament's Right

The greatest offence that Mr. O'Farrell complains of is that Parliament has assumed the right to fix rates. Parliament has had since its inception, and reserves to itself today, the right to fix the principles upon which rates for the carriage of goods in Canada shall be based. If, for the purpose of stabilizing the national wealth of the country, Parliament decides that an industry shall be assisted by having its transportation cost fixed and known, it surely has just as much right to do that as it has to protect by tariff legislation any industry the success of which possesses national value.

The Canadian farmer is, however, were not alone established upon that basis. When the Prairies were first opened and the question of whether or not they could be successfully settled was an issue, the principle that the cost of transportation of Canadian grain and flour should be known and settled was agreed to by the officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company; hence the rates known as the Grow's Nest rates.

Rates Abolished

In 1897, in consideration of a cash subsidy and an enormous grant of land, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company agreed to fix maxima rates on grain moving to Fort William and also to fix maxima rates on a number of commodities moving from eastern Canada to Fort William and all points west thereof. The American farmer is not so badly treated after all.

Comparative Rates

Mr. McGeer then gives a number of comparative rates in which he shows that many American lines carry freight much cheaper than Canadian. The cost from Vancouver to Winnipeg he shows on sugar is for the 1,466 miles \$1.60 per hundred pounds and from San Francisco to Minneapolis a distance of 2,144 miles 86 1/2 cents per hundred pound. He speaks of the earnings of the C.P.R. and in conclusion says:

'Whether or not the Canadian Pacific Railway Company can withstand successfully the competition of a government-owned road which is superior in every

She Was Troubled With Chronic Constipation

Once your bowels become constipated you are in for a lot of trouble, as constipation is one of the most prolific sources of disease that the human race is afflicted to, therefore a free motion of the bowels every day should be the aim of everyone who aspires to perfect health.

Mrs. O. W. Lawrence, Clarence East, N.B., writes:—"I was troubled with chronic constipation, and became so bad I was almost afraid to eat anything.

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respect to the Canadian Pacific Railway is doubtful. The great Canadian issue now is whether or not the Canadian Pacific Railway Company is going to absorb the government railways or the government take over the Canadian Pacific Railway system. The outcome of that issue will be the direct result of the success or failure of the Canadian National Railway system. If it can be operated successfully, as every indication today shows that it will, then the result will be that the government of the Dominion of Canada will take over the Canadian Pacific Railway, consolidate the two systems for the service of the Dominion, eliminate unnecessary and costly competition, and establish the Canadian railway system as an asset of the Dominion not only from the standpoint of operating but from the point of view that justified their creation, namely the establishment of a system of transportation around which the Dominion shall prosper and advance.

Head Trusty.

While in Okalla the shoemaker was made head trusty, he made lots of friends among the guards and officers coming in and out. He had the freedom of the gaol, and by his clever ways made himself out a martyr and gained lots of sympathy. Perhaps if these officers knew that this man was acquainted at one time with Gambino and Sarrafina, who were hanged in Montreal; with Daffino, who was electrocuted in the States, and that his acquaintances today in Vancouver are men who have been up for murder and white slavery, their sympathies would be with me instead of against me. I have been warned against all these men, but I hope to see the day when those seven years of mental torture will end for me. If a man takes six thousand dollars from a woman, and leaves her sick, without anything but a young child to support, I do not think he should be recommended for the Victoria Cross. I wish the reporters of these papers to see this, and from now on, leave me alone.

JEAN MORIN.

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She—No; when I marry I want a man who is game from head to foot.

Ex-Foothall man—Well, give me a chance; I've got a game leg already.