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## Mr. Bradette, M.P., Shows Why Towns Should Tax Railways

In Able Address in House of Commons, Member for Temiskaming North Presents the Case Against the Exemption of Railway Property from Municipal Taxation.

Last week The Advance made brief reference to Mr. J. A. Bradette's presentation to parliament of the case against exemption of Government railways from taxation. Mr. Bradette spoke at length in the House on the matter and presented the case very clearly. After complimenting the mover and seconder of the address from the throne on their able efforts and congratulating the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) and the prime minister (Mr. King) on their capable addresses, Mr. Bradette proceeded to explain that he had prepared a resolution in the matter of taxation of Government railways by municipalities, but had received notice from the clerk of the House that the resolution was not in order, as it was the sort of motion that was reserved for the Government to introduce. Mr. Bradette, however, read to the House his resolution which was as follows:—

"Taxation of Canadian National Railway property, on that portion of the railway system primarily known as the National Transcontinental, and extending from Quebec City to Winnipeg, for municipal and school purposes, in all localities, along these sections of the railway municipally organized—

"Whereas, government ownership of the Canadian National railway system has created a burdensome situation in a number of municipalities having a large portion of otherwise assessable property placed on the exempt list; and

"Whereas, in many cases the loss of municipal taxes from such exempt property is out of proportion and creates a very serious loss of revenue absolutely needed for the proper administration of municipal affairs; and

"Whereas, the prerogative of the crown, of having crown property exempt from taxation, was established prior to the crown ever expecting or undertaking to take up competitive business in full competition with private corporations which are subject to municipal taxation; and

"Whereas, it would appear that justice and equity would preclude the crown from taking advantage over private corporations in the discharge of corporate business; and

"Whereas, the National Transcontinental was built by the Dominion government for the Grand Trunk Pacific railway on the understanding that it would be handed over to this latter railway on completion and under a lease, as an integral part of the Grand Trunk Pacific system; and

"Whereas, the principal of taxation of railway property on the Canadian National railway has been maintained and in some cases established, in most sections of the present corporation, namely: over the portions of the system originally called the Grand Trunk railway, the Grand Trunk Pacific, the Canadian Northern and the Intercolonial;

"Therefore be it resolved: That this house urges the waiving of the prerogative of the crown of exempting any such railway property from municipal and school taxation, on that section of the Canadian National railway system originally known as the National Transcontinental railway, from Quebec city to Winnipeg, for all organized municipalities along that part of the Canadian National railway system which is occupied and used solely for the administration and maintenance of that portion of the aforesaid railway system."

Mr. Bradette then proceeded to quote from a resolution passed by the town of Cochrane and forwarded to the Government relative to the injustice suffered by the towns and villages of Northern Ontario and Quebec through the differentiation in respect to municipal taxation of the Canadian National Railways. This resolution presented the following array of facts:—

(1) The National Transcontinental line was built by the Dominion government for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway on the understanding that it would be handed over to this latter railway on completion and under a lease, as an integral part of the Grand Trunk Pacific system.

(2) The National Transcontinental line, to all intent and purpose, was completed at the close of the year of 1913, but the failure of the Grand Trunk Pacific to fulfil their undertaking left the National Transcontinental line at the mercy of an indifferent operation of portions of the road, by contractors, thereby greatly retarding the development around here.

(3) A large section of the National Transcontinental line has been built through virgin land of Northern Ontario and Northern Quebec and must be considered, in every sense of the word, purely a colonization road.

(4) The building of this colonization portion of the National Transcontinental line can therefore in no way be considered a boon to the towns along its right of way as all these towns had to come subsequent to the building of the railway and they have since done their full share in the colonization and development of the territory.

(5) The demand for educational and sanitary measures alone, in the building up of the towns to the present time, has been out of all proportion to the ability of ratepayers of these towns to meet, since the largest property holders, the railways, are exempt from municipal taxation.

(6) Conditions as they exist to-day in Cochrane are to be found in a more or less like measure along the entire colonization section of the National Transcontinental line between La Tuque, Quebec, and the Manitoba boundary.

(7) In addition, the town of Cochrane, in common with other towns and villages along the National Transcontinental line in Northern Ontario and Northern Quebec, has suffered repeated devastation and the town of Cochrane especially, suffered on two occasions almost complete destruction by fire.

(8) Again, owing to the inability of collecting adequate taxes, by reason of exemption of railway property, the town of Cochrane suffered severely through the scourge of epidemics, brought about through lack of funds to complete necessary sanitary improvements.

(9) In the year 1919 the town of Cochrane petitioned the Dominion government and parliament for relief through permitting assessment of railway property within the municipality and a promise was made that pending legislation of the session of 1919 would make special intervention by the government unnecessary, as through the creation of the Canadian National Railway Company, this company would be given a lease of the Canadian Government railways and would take the status of any ordinary corporation.

(10) Statements made in the House of Commons at that time by the leader of the government, as appearing in Hansard of that session, clearly indicate the intention of the government to fulfil promises made to the town of Cochrane, but there is nothing in the final bill enacting the Canadian National Railways Company to supplement such statements.

(11) The colonization section of the National Transcontinental line is the only railway built in Canada through virgin lands in the last forty years which has never assisted in the building and subsequent progress and development of towns and villages along its course, by assuming their just share of taxes to such municipalities.

(12) There is no place in Canada which presents a more incongruous situation than that which exists in Northern Ontario and Northern Que-

bec with respect to exemption of railway property from municipal taxation and no comparison can be made with sections of the Canadian Government railways where the advent of the railway came subsequent to the existence of towns and villages, thereby benefiting such towns and villages in a large measure.

Mr. Bradette further showed that based on the property assessment of the National Transcontinental Railway line within the municipality, Cochrane had lost about \$108,000 from 1915 to 1923; Sioux Lookout, \$361,550; Kapuskasing, \$2,520; Clute and Calder (Hunta), \$198.

Mr. Bradette referred to many letters he had received on the subject, and the general concurrence in the idea that municipalities had at least a moral right to taxes from railway properties in their boundaries. He mentioned the special grants to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, to the amount of \$230,000 a year, as compassionate grants in lieu of taxes. "As I say," he continued, "we would be quite satisfied in Northern Ontario to receive a grant. We do not want a straight assessment. Perhaps in the discussion some legal point might be brought up which it would be hard for us to overcome."

Mr. Bradette quoted from opinions expressed by Hon. Arthur Meighen, Hon. Thos. White and others to show that the National Railways were operated apart from the government and so should be under the same rules as to taxation that met other corporations.

Just before concluding his address Mr. Bradette, according to Hansard, said:—

"It will be seen that it was said by the government of the day that the Canadian National railway system was going to be run as a private corporation absolutely independent of the government. From that a layman would gather that the corporation would be liable to taxation just like any other private corporation. Another thing: to-day the Canadian National railway system is paying taxation to the tune of millions of dollars. Apparently what is meant in one case is fish in another, and Northern Ontario seems to be out of luck because of the fact that at the time of the construction of the National Transcontinental line the Grand Trunk Pacific did not want to undertake work of construction from Quebec to Winnipeg and through some unforeseen development the line was not taken over by that company. But I see no reason why we should be penalized on that account. It is absolutely unfair, and, I repeat, that morally, if not legally the section of the population affected should be given compensation by way of taxation."

### HAILEYBURY HAS A CASE OF SMALLPOX REPORTED

The Haileyburian last week says:— "A case of smallpox developed in Haileybury last week-end, the first to be reported here for several years. The patient is Mrs. John Wilder, Blackwall Street, who was stricken following a visit to friends at Kirkland Lake. The disease is said to be of a very mild type and Mrs. Wilder is, it is understood, not dangerously ill. One or two cases of chickenpox have been reported and are being carefully watched, but it is not thought that there is the slightest danger of an epidemic. Smallpox reached rather serious proportions in Kirkland district around the end of last year and a few cases were found in Cobalt, but in both places it was well handled and is now nearly over."

No man graduates from the school of experience. It's a life course. —Exchange.

Toronto Mail and Empire:—The hundreds who were turned away when Rabbi Isserman occupied the pulpit of the Carlton Street United Church, and the other hundreds who were turned away when Rev. E. Crossley Hunter preached from the Holy Blossom Synagogue are reminded that on numerous Sundays in the future they can listen to the rabbi at the synagogue and the minister in the church.

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### WOULD DO AWAY WITH THE PRIVILEGE OF FRANKING.

There is not much to be said in favour of the privilege of franking. There is no doubt but that the privilege is shamefully abused, party propaganda being sent by mail under cover of the franking privilege. Reference was made to this abuse by The Advance last week. Another feature of the case is emphasized by The St. Catharines Standard as follows:—

"It may be a matter of bookkeeping, but it will be a step in the right direction when all mail matter, in the course of Government business or communications by Members of Parliament and Senators is paid for at the usual rate and the Post Office Department receive the revenue for the carriage of this great volume. There is no reason why the Post Office Department should not be conducted on business lines, and if it performs a big function for the Government of the day and the country at large, which it has been doing for years, free, it should receive credit on the right side of the ledger."

She—Tell me, have you ever loved another?  
He—Why, yes, of course, dear. Do you think that I'd practice on a nice girl like you?—Record.

Berkeley (California) Gazette:—There is a current idea that most American tourists who fare abroad, go to Europe. They do not. They go to Canada. In the first nine months of this year 11,435,000 tourists from the United States entered the Dominion, of whom 8,500,000 entered Ontario. That, by the way, represented a gain of 30 per cent. over the same period last year.

London Free Press:—Some irresponsibles of Mitchell, Ont., rotten-eggged the cars of the Clinton hockey team recently because the Clinton sextette administered defeat to Mitchell's team in their own town. It would be difficult to imagine an incident prompted by narrow regard for one's own town and a restricted sort of love for a sport that would show a broader lack of true regard for a town and less real sportsmanship.

Springfield (Mass.) Union:—Further evidence that Chicago is the real seat of culture in the United States is to be found in the announcement that the seats in a new theatre in that city are to be equipped with chewing-gum slot machines, ash trays and receptacles for used gum.

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