

SEN. FLETCHER URGES REVISION RAILWAY RATES

FLORIDA SENATOR WANTS LONG
STANDING DISCRIMINATION IN
FAVOR OF NORTH ATLANTIC
PORTS REMEDIED.

BY GEORGE H. MANNING.

Washington, July 2.—The necessity for establishment by the United States Railroad Administration of the same rates on export traffic from the central west, including Western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota, to the gulf and South Atlantic ports as are charged from the same points to the North Atlantic ports, was fully and forcefully presented to Walker D. Hines, director general of railroads, a few days ago by Senator Fletcher, of Florida.

The gulf and South Atlantic ports cannot expect to receive their share of export tonnage, Senator Fletcher urged, so long as the railroads, by selfishly refusing to join the southern lines in the fixing of advantageous rates to southern and gulf ports, compel all exporters to use the North Atlantic ports, even on shipments to Central and South America.

Senator Fletcher considers it very important to have these rates fixed before the railroads are turned back to their owners, because then several months, and perhaps years, he thinks, may be required to secure favorable action through the interstate commerce commission.

Senator Fletcher's argument, synopsis of which was printed in the Journal, was as follows, in detail:

For many years the eastern trunk lines, operating from and to North Atlantic ports and the states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and that territory reached by the rail north of the Ohio river, steadfastly refused as a whole to establish rates of freight on export traffic from the territory in question to South Atlantic and gulf ports. This policy of the eastern trunk lines was obviously a selfish one, designed to force the great movement of export traffic from the Ohio basin to the North Atlantic ports, and in this way avoid sharing the earnings with the carriers operating south of the Ohio river. In these designs the eastern trunk lines have been very successful, as is substantiated by the records of the various ports, which show the bulk of the export traffic from the central west has moved through North Atlantic ports and has thus deflected from its natural channels which in a very large measure lie through the gulf and South Atlantic ports, particularly when the traffic is destined to Latin America.

The concentration of freight shipments for export at North Atlantic ports and which, as above explained, is primarily due to the selfish policies of the eastern trunk lines in refusing to join the southern lines in the establishment and operation of freight rates to gulf and South Atlantic ports, in line with those prevailing to North Atlantic ports, has in turn forced the allocation at North Atlantic ports, by the United States shipping board, of hundreds of steamships, a large proportion of which would have been allocated to South Atlantic and gulf ports were it not for the discrimination of rates in favor of North Atlantic ports as is referred to.

Therefore, these discriminations in inland rates have made it impossible to first—establish steamship lines from gulf to South Atlantic ports to various countries of the world, particularly to Latin America; second—have retarded the rebuilding of the gulf and South Atlantic ports' facilities as a whole, in that the volume of traffic moving through these ports in many instances requires but a part of their present facilities to handle same, that is to say that the port facilities of the South Atlantic and gulf ports, as a whole, are used to but a fraction of their present capacity; third—have made it necessary to route southern products to various ports throughout the world to North Atlantic ports, by reason of the inadequate sailing and service from southern ports, which sailings and service, as above explained, could be automatically established were the in-

land adjustment of rates to southern ports from central western territory on a parity with rates from the same territory to North Atlantic ports.

It is obvious from this brief outline, that the failure to establish rail rates to gulf and South Atlantic ports from the central western section of the country in line with those rates existing in North Atlantic ports, has not only retarded the development of southern ports, but has deprived the southern states of the steamship trade routes which would naturally follow the flow of a heavy volume of export freight from the central western section through those ports if the transportation charges thereon were on a parity with those applying to the North Atlantic ports.

In consequence of the absence of this flow of import and export traffic through the South Atlantic and gulf ports, these ports have not only been deprived of the services of regular steamship lines, which would tend to induce manufacturers and merchants to locate in the port cities and in the interior immediate tributary to the ports, but it has deprived the south of the revenue that comes to them from the employment of labor in handling ships at the ports and the large sums that are expended in supplying and provisioning the ships for their voyages, which, of course, include the vast tonnage of coal which is used in fueling the merchant ships.

Not only has the south suffered economically from the discrimination against its ports in rail rates, but it has also suffered economically from the system of rates operated by the United States shipping board from North Atlantic ports versus gulf and South Atlantic ports, the injustice of this respect being illustrated by the following example: The rates from South Atlantic and gulf ports to Havana, Cuba, are the same as they are from New York and Boston, notwithstanding that the distance from the South Atlantic and gulf ports is many hundreds of miles less than from New York and Boston, and it can be proven that the actual cost of operating a vessel in one case is about half what it is in the other.

On the other hand, the rates from South Atlantic ports to European ports, when the distance is a small percentage greater than the distance from the North Atlantic ports measured by the total distance involved, are very much higher than the rates from the North Atlantic ports to the same destinations. The shipping board has partly recognized the injustice of this basis by establishing on coal, from Charleston, S. C., to European ports, the same rates as apply from Hampton Roads and New York, and this would seem to be more reason why they should not, in the same manner, accord the South Atlantic and gulf ports a fair difference under the North Atlantic ports when it can be shown that the operating costs justify a difference.

Therefore, from this description of the existent situation, it is apparent that the United States Railroad Administration should establish rates from the central west, including Western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, etc., on export traffic identical with the rates applying from the same points to North Atlantic ports, and should require the lines north of the Ohio river to divide said rates on an equitable basis with the lines south of the Ohio river. The United States Railroad Administration have already set a precedent for the equalization of the North Atlantic port rates via the South Atlantic and gulf ports by their action in requiring the lines serving Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, etc., to publish export rates to Pacific Coast ports, which, in effect, on the Oriental business and Australian business, equalize the through rates to these countries via North Atlantic ports; therefore, no question of new policies on the part of the railroad administration is involved in this demand. The railroad administration is not called upon to reduce their revenues because the same rates will apply to gulf and South Atlantic ports as apply to North Atlantic ports, and the earnings to the railroad administration on the whole will be precisely the same. The proposition merely calls for the establishment of rates which will permit the shipments to flow through all our ports, instead of continuing to foster an artificial means of directing the traffic through North Atlantic ports and which practice has been so disastrous during the war.

There is another great problem in which the south is vitally interested

Call to "Chow" From Aloft



CALL TO CHOW—

Hundreds of soldiers, sailors and marines are called to "chow" daily in Seattle by a military bugler atop the Soldiers' and Sailors' Club in the heart of the city's business section. War Camp Community Service adopted this novel way of informing the service men in a language they could all understand, that all the city's canteens are ready and eager to serve them three times a day.

As proposed, will greatly alleviate, namely, that the south will be and which the equalization of export supplied with a sufficient number of cars to handle its products, which in quantity are shipped north, east and west at the rate of about three cars to every one car received in the reverse direction. In the past hundreds of industries have been forced to close down because of the inability of the carriers to furnish them with cars, which would not have been the case if export traffic could flow through the southern ports, in their way bringing into the south the necessary equipment to handle its heavy domestic shipments.

TAXI DRIVER IS MOST HATED MAN IN LONDON

London, June 30.—The taxicab driver is the best-hated man in London. All through the war he ruled the taxi-riding public with an iron hand and his sway, owing to the continued shortage of cabs, probably will have to be endured for many more months.

You may ride in a taxicab here only if the driver finds that your destination suits his own convenience. His decision will be influenced by his quick prognosis of the amount of the tip your appearance and manner indicate. If you look like a "close un" you will save time by joining a queue for a bus or throwing yourself into the maelstrom of a tube crowd, for it is certain you won't ride in a taxicab.

Any man bold enough to challenge the lofty authority of a taxicab driver wins instant popularity and draws about him a throng of admirers. So there were loud cheers and a rush for the spot when a passenger the other day dove into an empty taxicab through the Strand and refused the driver's demand that he get out. The driver stopped his cab and refused to budge.

"Drive me to Liverpool street. You can't refuse a fare," said the passenger.

"Can't I? Get out of my cab," re-

torted the driver.

A policeman pushed his way through the crowd with "What's all this?"

"He refuses to get out of my cab."

"He refuses to drive me," was the shouted chorus of driver and fare.

The policeman began to make notes. "Do you wish to prosecute?" he asked the passenger.

"No, I want to get to Liverpool street," was the mild reply.

"Stick to it!" the spectators urged the passenger.

The crowd soon blocked the street. The driver leaned unconcernedly against the "guard" of his cab and lighted a cigarette. The fare reclined against the cushions. This continued for twenty minutes. The crowd began betting on the outcome. Odds were offered on the driver.

"Well," said the passenger at last, rather weakly, "I think I've taught you a lesson."

"Not going, are you?" sneered the driver.

"Unfortunately, I have an appointment," the fare said to the crowd as he alighted, trying to cover his retreat.

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