

Calvin Coolidge Says:

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NORTHAMPTON, Mass., March 19.—Among the other sources of surplus now appears transportation. With the decline of trade the movement of passengers and freight has decreased about 25 per cent. The railroads have six hundred and fifty thousand idle freight cars.

This situation is aggravated by the motor bus and truck. The country has expended large amounts in the past twenty years for hard surfaced highways. This provides a free right of way for the commercial motor. With the present low cost of gasoline, even after paying the tax, with no regulation of rates and service, with some overloading and consequent injury to roads and bridges, this is a competition which the railroads charge is unfair. They want their competitors placed on an equal basis with themselves either by removing the restrictions on the railroads or placing similar restrictions on motors.

There is much force in this proposal. Both services might benefit by some division of long and short haul, heavy and light freight. The railroads are a public necessity. The government, in taking charge of them, has rendered them unable to protect themselves. Public welfare demands an equal chance for them in a fair field.

CALVIN COOLIDGE