

Calvin Coolidge Says:

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NORTHAMPTON, Mass., May 21.—One of the most difficult questions pressing urgently for decision by government and business is railroad rates. Almost daily some one in Washington is urging the maintenance of the present wage scale. But wages cannot be paid without ready money. The public attitude has not encouraged the railroads to accumulate a surplus even if possible. They have to pay wages and taxes out of current earnings. They claim nearly all the increased rates allowed about ten years ago have been withdrawn by subsequent orders of the government. Mean time wage scales were increased.

Business would consider an increase in railroad rates as a serious burden at this time. If it resulted in increased employment on the railroads there might be large compensations and if it created confidence and revived trade, approval would be universal, but these reactions are problematical. No one can long expect railroad service that is not paid for or continuation of wages that do not come out of income. Those in authority who are asking for the maintenance of wages will have to give some thought to helping to provide the income for their payment. The decision of the government on this question is a serious responsibility.

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