

is, independent of his statement. The hon. Minister says that if you go to the harbour of Fort Wrangell and transport the products there to a river steamer you will have undoubtedly to pay the American duty on those goods in order to bring them to the Canadian territory at the beginning of the railway. Before these gentlemen come before the House of Commons and the people of Canada and say that they are making a contract for an all-Canadian route they should be prepared to show that it is really an all-Canadian route. They are not able to say that with regard to this contract. The Minister of Railways himself says that the goods must be transhipped and when transhipped must pay duty. Knowing the Americans as we do, knowing the history of their intercourse with Canadians, knowing the advantage they have taken of Canadians at every opportunity, we know that we can not expect any concessions or favours from them. Carrying out the law they will have the power, according to the Minister of Railways and Canals, to levy the American duty on every dollar's worth of Canadian goods sent up the Stikine River, though we have the free navigation of that river for ever, thanks to the foresight and prescience of the late right hon. Sir John Macdonald. The Government has to demonstrate, as they have not yet done, that it is a Canadian route in reality, before they can expect to get the approval of the House of Commons or the people of the country for this contract. The Minister of Railways and Canals has failed to prove that point, and therefore I say the House must pause, the House must wait for the information before they can approve of a contract which, while it was heralded as an all-Canadian route. The Minister of Railways and Canals himself has demonstrated to-day that it is not an all-Canadian route in the sense in which we desired it to be, that is, giving us free access through Canadian territory for Canadian goods without paying duties to American custom-houses.

Now, there is another consideration. The Government say that, in considering this contract, they were brought face to face with a case of urgency fraught with many disastrous possibilities. In the first place, they say, they had to provide for the administration of justice in that country, and that if we wanted to send up North-west Mounted Police, we could not do so unless we had transportation facilities by which to send them. That calls to mind the fact that Major Walsh, who has been sent up there to administer affairs in the Yukon territory, has not arrived there yet. I cannot give the exact date, but I think I am correct in saying that his appointment was made several months before he started for the Yukon, and during this time he was going round the country. I hope the Government will explain the reasons why Major Walsh and the officers and men of the

North-west Mounted Police accompanying him remained here for two months after their appointment before they started for this district, knowing the severity of the winter, and knowing all the conditions that prevailed there, making travel in the winter season difficult, if not impossible. Speaking from memory, his appointment was made in the month of August, and he and his party did not start on their trip until about October; fully two months elapsed from the time of his appointment until he was sent away. Well, the consequence has been what might have been expected, that he has been stayed on the route, that he has gone a short distance towards his destination, and that he and his party are now tied up on the route, far away from Dawson City, far away from those thousands of people for whom he was required to administer law and order. But, Sir, judging from the history of other portions of this country, judging from what has been done elsewhere, there is not much danger under the British flag of law and order being set at defiance. Do we not know that at Rossland, in British Columbia, there is a population composed of similar elements, sometimes called a lawless population, a large portion, at any rate, of which is composed of miners and adventurous spirits, and no strong force was required to keep them in order? The statement has been made—and I believe it is true, because I have been there myself and know the circumstances—that in Rossland, with its 6,000 of population, only one constable was needed for the whole community. Law and order prevail, and a man's life is just as safe there as it is in the city of Ottawa. People could travel round at any hour of the day or night, and without any fear of being molested. However, I think it is quite a proper safeguard to send a force to the Yukon territory, a moderate force, not one involving such an enormous expense; because I think the returns will show that the expense of sending so large a force up there at the time has been very great, and that it was not a wise arrangement to have made at that time. Now, Sir, I come to another important point, the necessity for building this railroad and for making the bargain the Government have made with the contractors. The Minister of Railways told us that the estimates that had been made of the number of people who are likely to go in there; he did not venture to make the estimate himself, but he told us that men who ought to know, men who had given the transportation problem a great deal of attention, expressed the opinion that 250,000 people might be going into the Yukon in the year 1898; while conservative estimates made by these same gentlemen would not reduce the figures to less than 100,000. But, said he, taking half of the lowest estimate that was made, look at the enormous number of people that would re-