

ferent basis—that to make the change now would be an interference with vested interests, that men who hold lands bought before the imposition of any tax for the construction of railroads would protest against the imposition of such a tax and claim that it was, in effect, a confiscation of values for which they had worked and paid. Obviously if the present system is wrong, the perpetuation and continuation of it can never make it right. Canada is relatively a young country—a great deal of our railroad construction is still to be done. There can be no time better than the present to make the change from an unsound and untenable position to one which is fundamentally and economically sane and right.\* If the contention that the track cost should be charged against land is right—morally and economically—then it is wrong to charge it against the freight carried. If to-day we are working upon a wrong basis—to-day is the time to rectify it—there is no other time, and the injustice in making the change would not by any means equal the injustice of letting conditions remain. Society does not hesitate to adopt new machinery if it involves

Evidently the French caught this idea:

\*“When this survey was completed, they next took up the question of principles of ownership and management. While other countries were acting and experimenting, France was reasoning. There was a long series of debates in the years 1837-1840. Nothing was settled until 1842. The author of the plan finally adopted was Thiers. The state was to contribute about \$50,000 per mile and own the roadbed. Private enterprise was to be called upon for whatever was necessary about \$40,000 per mile) for track, equipment, buildings, etc. After some forty years the whole was to revert to the state.”  
—Railroad Transportation, by Hadley.