

thing in return for it. We must consider that we are putting it out of our power to give to the people engaged in the production of grain in this country the great advantages which we ought to give them by reducing the rates of freight. This road will not bear comparison with the construction of the Intercolonial Railway. That road was a political necessity, decided upon as a means of confederating and actually joining together the provinces of the original confederation. It had no commercial basis. But this Grand Trunk Pacific Railway claims to have a commercial basis; and if it has, I do not see why it cannot be managed as well by the government as by a company. At any rate, I think we ought to seek the means, which other foreign countries have found, not only of building but of running our great transportation system. They have succeeded well in other countries, and I believe we have the ability in Canada to make our railways a benefit to the people at large. If a profit can be made in this work, that profit should inure to the people who are producing the wealth of the country. It may be true that there is not a profit in it at once, but I do not see any reason why there should not be a profit in the future as the country develops, and as it comes it should be used to lessen the rates to farmers shipping grain over the road, which is supposed to be the greatest item of freight that the road will carry. So, there does not appear to be any immediate necessity for rushing into a matter like this, especially the construction of the eastern section of the road. As has been pointed out before, we were quite as desirous as the government that the Grand Trunk Railway Company, that large company, having its ramifications throughout the province of Ontario and Quebec, should have access to the wheat fields of the Northwest. It is not a matter of surprise that the Grand Trunk was seeking an entrance to the Northwest. But they had no such scheme as that which the government now places before us. Their scheme if entertained by the government would have been infinitely less expensive to Canada. Had they been given a charter and the right to run into the wheat fields, there would have been no necessity to give a government grant for the building of the railroad in that section of the country, for it would be built at small expense and would bring a ready return. But it was quite to be expected that the line through the less productive sections of the country, for instance, the line around the north shore of Lake Superior or through the Rockies and Selkirks would have deserved, and I have no doubt would have received, reasonable assistance from the government. But that assistance probably would not exceed \$10,000,000 to \$12,000,000 at most. It has been estimated at a lower amount than that on the basis of the usual grant given to rail-

ways in that territory. Even giving all the grants that could reasonably have been asked it would not have amounted to more than \$15,000,000. For that we should have had practically another transcontinental road, for the Grand Trunk has connections already with the Atlantic ports, and would have had through connections to the Pacific coast. Compare this with the enormous expenditure that Canada has entered into in this undertaking—\$150,000,000 for a service which the Grand Trunk was ready to give us for not more than \$12,000,000. But the route chosen is imposed upon the company by the government. The company were told: We will not give you a charter unless you agree to build a road through the northern territory from Winnipeg to Moncton, and in that way run through a territory practically unknown. When, it is built, as is proposed, at the cost of the taxpayers, the question is whether it would not be profitable for the people to run it as well as build it. Going through the country as it does, it could not get a local trade. The company, therefore, were in a position to make great demands upon the government. A bargain was supposed to be concluded, but now they make further demands. And we have no assurance that when they go back to the shareholders of the company they may not say: We will not agree to this; we will have more concessions. We cannot but be surprised that the government should be so supine as they have been, being prepared, apparently, to give the Grand Trunk all they ask.

I take the liberty, again, Mr. Speaker, of moving the adjournment of the debate.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on.

Mr. RICHARDSON. If it is the pleasure of the House that I should continue, I have still something more to say on this very important subject. It is one that will bear talking about, and the time may come when we will look back, and, if we have a keen interest in the welfare of the country, we may wish that we had said more and had used every argument to prevent an unwise bargain being carried out. We appeal again to the government not to press the matter at this juncture with the scanty information it possesses as to the territory through which it is proposed to build the road. There are many other reasons. One thing was brought out in the debate very markedly, and it seems to be growing upon the intelligent thought of the community, that the time has come when we should give serious consideration to the idea of the government taking control of the large services of the country especially that of railway transportation.

I believe the feeling is widespread that even with respect to the smaller franchises, and that is quite evident with regard to the franchises in our cities, we should have