

Mr. MANION: My hon. friend who has just taken his seat, and some other hon. members, have implied that the party on this side was completely opposing the expenditure now proposed on the Hudson Bay railway. I admit that a number of speeches have been delivered on this side questioning the advisability of spending such an amount of money, and the advisability particularly of spending the vast amount that will ultimately be necessary to build up elevators, lighthouses, and so forth, to investigate the feasibility of the Hudson bay route. At the same time I point out that the best speeches, to my mind, which have been made in favour of this vote have been made by members of the Conservative party from the western provinces, in particular the members for South Winnipeg (Mr. Rogers), Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Kennedy), and others. I say that in justice to these gentlemen, because it is true that in this party there are differences of opinion.

I have sat in this House for a number of years, and for the last four or five years I have heard this question discussed. But this is the first time I have ever said a word on the subject, and while I represent the city of Fort William, which would probably be injured more by the building of the Hudson Bay railway and the utilization of that route, if it were a success, for the shipment of grain, than perhaps any other city in the country, I am not opposing the vote this afternoon in any way. I have the good fortune to represent a very fine constituency. I represent a constituency where the people are broadminded enough to think in Canadian terms; and in saying that I do not desire to make any reflection upon anybody who may differ from me in regard to this railway. I believe we should look upon all questions of this kind as Canadian questions. Personally I am of the belief that we cannot carry on the government of this country successfully and well if we take too much of a sectional view in regard to any of these questions. I am quite open myself to conviction upon this matter. At the same time I point out—and with all due respect to the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat and who has been a little severe, too severe perhaps, towards those who do not agree with him and who hold that the grounds upon which this undertaking is based should be looked into—that those entertaining a contrary opinion have as much right to their views as the men who support the building of the Hudson Bay railway. They have looked into the project, they have read the reports made with respect to it,

they have read the editorials in the press, they have heard speeches upon it; and certainly you can find from these different sources as good an argument one way as the other—perhaps I should say a better argument against than for. Take for example what we read in the newspapers of this city. If I mistake not, the two papers published here, one Liberal and the other Conservative, are both opposed to this expenditure upon the Hudson bay route. That is my recollection; I am open to correction if I am wrong, but I think I am not. The same is true of other sections of the country; many newspapers, both Liberal and Conservative, have been opposing the expenditure upon this route. At the same time I believe the real basis for that opinion is that the people feel they do not want to embark upon the expenditure of another twenty-five or fifty million dollars without being certain they are going to get something in return. This is the feeling which prevails throughout the country. And may I right here suggest something my hon. friend (Mr. Bird) has sneered at but which I think, has never been done, although necessary, that is to have a proper investigation made of Hudson strait and Hudson bay before expending further large amounts of money. I am not discussing the vote of \$3,000,000 which is proposed by the Minister of Railways at the present moment. I have no objection to that expenditure because it has been promised, I think, by the leaders of both political parties, who I believe made promises in the west that an amount of money would be spent for this purpose. Personally I have no criticism to offer of that expenditure, but to make the route feasible, to make it possible for ships to carry wheat by this route to the European ports, which would mean the building of elevators, the dredging of the Nelson river, and the building of docks and lighthouses, the Minister of Railways himself admits would require an expenditure of \$26,000,000; and anybody who is familiar with the administrative matters knows that a minister will always admit a very much less amount than the actual expenditure will be. Probably the right figure would be half that much again, if not double the amount of the minister's present estimate. Now, I do not believe that even my hon. friends from the prairie provinces, who are heartily supporting the project, would be very desirous of spending unnecessarily, from twenty-five to fifty million dollars of the money of the people of this country. I cannot understand why they should take the attitude of desiring such an amount of money to be spent unless there will be some return for it. May I suggest that while this expenditure of