

the control of a commission, and that no private corporation will have an opportunity to unnecessarily control or dominate those terminals. That will obviate the necessity, of course, of our having to expropriate them, as we may some of the terminals at the head of the lakes. It is of equally great importance, it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, and I am expressing the opinion of men who have given the matter every consideration, that provision without further delay should be made for the construction of terminals at Vancouver and Prince Rupert. I do not know whether the hon. members of this House have given any consideration to the problem of transportation as it may be raised by the construction and completion of the Panama canal, but it has already been demonstrated by shippers who have sent grain from as far east, I believe, as Moosejaw, that it is possible to ship that grain west to Vancouver, and then by water carriage around the Horn and convey it to England in a little longer time, but at substantially the same freight rate at which it can be conveyed to the head of the lakes, and by water carriage shipped to Liverpool. And that during the winter months it is quite possible now to ship grain to Vancouver, and by water carriage from there, so as to reach all corners of the world quite as cheaply, if not at little better freight terms, than it is possible to have that same grain conveyed to the eastern seaboard by railway carriage, and from thence to the markets across the ocean. Now, if that be so it is quite apparent, it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the construction of that canal will have a revolutionary effect upon the transportation problem of the west, and it is of the highest possible importance that this House should make provision for the early construction of terminals at Vancouver and Prince Rupert to meet the demands that will be absolutely made upon this country when the Panama canal is completed.

The construction of the Hudson Bay railway, as I have said, will bring the interior portions of Canada many days closer than at present to the markets of England and the continent, and it is of importance for the same reason that we should provide every facility by which the demands of the west can be met without delay. The Hudson Bay railway itself must follow the best possible route. I am pleased, and I am sure every western man will be equally so, that no question has been raised by the incoming government as to the necessity for the construction of that railway. It will provide an additional transportation route by means of which millions of bushels of grain that will be produced on the fertile prairies of the west will find access to the markets of the world, and even although that route be open only

Mr. R. B. BENNETT.

for a very short time in the year, it will afford that measure of relief which the absolute necessity of the case demands. It is of the highest possible importance, not only that the best route with the best grades be chosen, but that the terminals also shall be the best that can be provided. I am convinced that the determination of these questions by the government, after proper consideration, will commend itself to the people of every portion of this great dominion.

I doubt not that our friends opposite will congratulate us upon the splendid heritage in the way of buoyant and expanding revenues, and increasing trade that they have left to us. But in that connection I have also to remind them, Mr. Speaker, that they left us a legacy of great responsibilities and great obligations. No student of affairs in western Canada can for a single moment contemplate the construction of one of the means of transportation that I have just referred to—namely, the National Transcontinental railway—without being seized of the fact that there is a railway that has cost in its construction from 50 to 75 per cent more than the estimates of its engineers anticipated, and that that involves an added burden upon the men of the west in the shipping of their products to the sea in the form of increased freight rates. But, Sir, that is not all. The manufacturers of the east have quite as much interest in the question as the producers of the west, because if the cost of transporting the goods manufactured in the east bears an improper relation to the actual cost of those goods, as is very often the case, then it follows that there will be difficulties because the enhanced price will at once stimulate the differences between the east and the west. The east has an equal interest with the west in the question of the cost of the road to which I have referred; and, speaking for myself, I can only say that I hope the incoming administration will without delay see that a proper commission is appointed to investigate why it is that this road has cost from 50 to 75 per cent more than the engineers expected. This is very vital to the people of the west in so far as the question of transportation is concerned because the fixed charges of a railway, as we all know, are the principal factors which determine what the freight rates shall be; and if those fixed charges have become excessive by reason of the reckless expenditures of public moneys, it follows that in order to meet them the rates must be correspondingly increased. I had intended dealing with this subject at greater length, but I shall pass on merely hoping, as I have said, that at the earliest possible moment proper steps will be taken to ascertain just why it is so great a sum of money has been