

has nothing to suppress, that has nothing to conceal, that submits to the House, to the country, all it knows; and the reasons given by the Minister of Finance, in my humble opinion, as the hon. member for Kings, P.E.I. (Mr. Hughes) who spoke before me, has said, are that the transaction is not genuine, it is not a first-class transaction.

A MEMBER: Time, time.

Mr. LAFORTUNE (translation): Mr. Chairman, if my time is up, I will immediately take my seat, for I ask favours from no one. Is my time up, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. RAINVILLE (translation): The hon. member has spoken one minute over, but—

Mr. LAFORTUNE (translation): If my time has expired, I do not want any favour, I withdraw, delighted to bow to you.

Mr. PROULX (Prescott) (translation): Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to discuss in any way the nationalization policy, neither for or against; such a question is far too important to be intelligently discussed by us during the very limited time allotted us. I will therefore limit my remarks to simply stating that, if the Government must provide, by way of subventions, to the managing and operating expenses of the Canadian Northern company, in the form of security, for instance, it seems to me far more preferable that the Government should take over without any expense, the 60 per cent of the capital stock not now in the hands of the Minister of Finance, by means of the Act of 1914.

To-day the Government propose to buy this 60 per cent of the company's capital stock of a par value of \$60,000,000, which, according to the report of the commission appointed last year by the Government—I mean the Smith, Drayton and Acworth commission—is perfectly worthless, and notwithstanding that report made by their own commission, the Government come and ask Parliament the power to submit to arbitration the very value of this capital stock. Have not the members on this side of the House any reason to suspect there is something in the wind and that the Government's object can only be to make a gift to the Canadian Northern company and, more particularly, to Messrs. Mackenzie and Mann. They are probably expecting from these gentlemen a fat contribution to the electoral funds, seeing the inevitability of a general election. If we look over the history of the Canadian Northern, we can see that almost

every year, since 1911, it has been nothing but a case of continuous calls for help, under the shape of gifts, of guarantees or securities, and the editor of *Le Devoir* was quite right when he said in an editorial—which, be it said by the way, was very ably written—that it was perhaps the greatest robbery perpetuated in Canada during the past few years. For the edification of the House, I will take the liberty of reading an article written by Mr. Henri Bourassa and printed in *Le Devoir*. I believe this article should be inserted in the official report of the House. The said editorial is dated the 16th instant and it is entitled: "The Canadian Northern Deal."

In the day of "barbarity," the bandits of high standing and the ordinary highwaymen waited for some moral or physical commotion in the world. Stormy nights favoured the storming of towns and castles. During the days of riot or of revolution, pilfering barons and free-companies made opulent razzias. It was under the cover of storms that the sea pirates and the plunderers of shore wreckage made their richest prizes.

With the "progress" of our times, the brigands, the real brigands, the high brigands, have remarkably extended their fields of operation. They operate upon entire countries. Thanks to the venality of the press and of parliaments, thanks also to the weakness of the people, they overexcite the popular emotions and take advantage of a moment of general frantiness to plunder the nations. And what further proves their immense superiority over the pilferers of old is the fact that, in this game, they only risk other people's hides.

The Canadian Northern deal is really one of the most successful, both by the amplitude of the results and by the fine boldness of the proceedings. After having cleverly heaved up the popular passions through the spectre of conscription, they organize everywhere so-called "win-the-war conventions," they talk of coalition, of National government, of prolongation and then of immediate dissolution—always, of course, for the safety of the empire, of democracy and of "superior civilization." Then, when Parliament unnerved by the heat and the doubts of the political situation, is no longer in a position to do anything sensibly, they carry the place by storms. The good-natured people, hypnotized by conscription, already entangled in electoral wrangling, is saddled, without uttering a word, with a burden equal to half the war expenditure and double the national debt piled up during a half century before the war.

Messrs. Drayton and Acworth's report alone is sufficient evidence that, instead of pulling the Canadian Northern managers out of difficulty, the Government should have, long ago, forced them to disgorge and summoned them before the Assize court. This report shows: 1° That the capital stock, shown as being \$100,000,000 in the company's books, does not represent one cent in cash; 2° That the profit estimates furnished by the company to Parliament, in 1914, in order to get a \$45,000,000 State guarantee, were manifestly false and tampered with; 3° That the estimates subsequently submitted to the inquiry commission, although notably less inflated than those of 1914, were