

good highways for Eastern Canada. The hon. member has said that these roads in Eastern Canada are really for automobiles. Let me tell him that the great majority of the automobiles in operation in the eastern provinces of Canada are owned by farmers, and I am glad to see them using them to bring their products to market where they can get a good price. The great cry of the farmer of Eastern Canada is for good roads. I am sure that any man who has seen the good roads in the neighbouring Republic would hold up his hands for good roads in Canada.

As I said when introducing this Bill, these highways will also provide employment for the returned soldiers. Perhaps at the present time there may not be so great a demand for employment by the returned soldiers; they perhaps do not wish to go into employment immediately upon their return home; but the time is coming when employment will have to be provided, and I think it is the duty of the Government to provide employment in the way of good roads and other works of benefit to the country. Where we have had good roads constructed in Canada you will see the farmers using them to take their products to the market. They are also used for distributing the freight amongst the small towns. Good roads have been found to be of such great benefit in the neighbouring Republic that the federal government of the United States has voted this year \$800,000,000 for good roads, and the local governments are all spending large amounts on the construction of good roads in the rural districts. In my opinion it is to the advantage of Canada that we should proceed with this Bill. My hon. friend is anxious that we should do everything we can to advance the Northwest. Surely, he has some little consideration for the needs of the eastern provinces.

Mr. MAHARG: I am delighted to know that the great difficulty the minister has been up against in the past has been removed. Now, apparently, his difficulty is to get ties and labour. Well, if he will promise me that he will build railroads in western Canada as fast as we can produce the necessary ties and labour I will withdraw all my objections to this Highways Bill right here and now. But things must have changed within the last month or so, for it was less than a month ago that we interviewed the minister in connection with the delay in laying the steel on the Hudson Bay railway, and he informed us then that he did not know where the money was to

come from. I am delighted to know that that difficulty has been overcome, and that his only difficulty now is to get ties and labour to do the grading.

Mr. J. D. REID: The hon. member will remember that at that time he stated that there would be no trouble in getting ties for the Hudson Bay railway. I understood from the president of the Canadian National Railways a few days ago, that though he was willing to give contracts for ties, they had not got a tie up to the present time, and from what he told me I do not believe he will be able to get ties to proceed with the work this season. I stated then what I state now. The president of the Canadian National Railways told me that they could not get enough of the kind of labour they required to build more than some 350 miles of new railway and some 350 miles which has to be re-built, and I have yet to find any man from the West either in this House or out of it who has shown me where labour can be got to carry out more than the programme mapped out. At all events until this amount of work has been done, I think I will take the word of the president of the Canadian National Railways, which is to the effect I have mentioned.

Mr. TOBIN: Did I understand the minister to say that he could not go on with the building of railways on account of a shortage of ties—that the president of the Canadian National Railways told him he could not get ties?

Mr. J. D. REID: I was talking of building railways in Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan. I said that he could not get ties for the Hudson Bay railway up in that district.

Mr. TOBIN: I am glad the minister has mentioned that, because different large lumbermen of that part of the country from which I come understand there is a sort of combine or trust in connection with the Canadian National Railways, and that only a favoured few can get a contract for ties; that it is a case of wheels within wheels, in fact. I do not know if the minister knows about it, but I think he should inform himself on that point. I know concerns with half a million ties to sell who approached the Government, but could do no business with them. At the same time I understand that only a few days ago agents were going around other parts of the country buying ties for the Canadian National Railways.

[Mr. J. D. Reid.]