

Mr. PUGSLEY. I said if the policy of the government was to be announced it would not properly rest with me but rather with the Minister of Finance.

Hon. W. S. FIELDING (Minister of Finance). I think the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), has on more than one occasion expressed the view of the government in regard to this great work and I can hardly think my hon. friend (Mr. Monk) is serious in asking the Minister of Finance to make any new announcement of policy. I cannot claim I have given as close personal attention to the matter as my hon. friend and others who have addressed the House, but I frankly say that the project of a deep waterway from the great lakes to Montreal, an all-British, all Canadian canal, has always seemed to me to be a most attractive proposition. It is attractive, commercially, it is attractive from the point of view of military tactics and naval defence, which has been half seriously referred to. I think from every point of view the whole project is a fascinating one, and far from throwing cold water on it, it is my desire to be counted among the supporters of that great enterprise.

While the Minister of Finance is obliged sometimes to take a rather cold-blooded view of some of these fascinating projects, we have had great enterprises to handle in the past. Hon. gentlemen opposite have sometimes told us we were spending too much and straining the credit of Canada to the danger point. I am glad to know that they did not mean that very seriously, because if they felt that we had been straining our credit to the danger point in the past the hon. member for Jacques Cartier would hardly ask us to undertake a new expenditure of three hundred or four hundred millions of dollars. The fact that he is ready to speak of this two or three or four hundred million dollars so lightly is in one sense gratifying, because it enables us to know that he has an abiding faith in the credit of Canada. However, the best way to maintain one's credit is not to make too many demands upon it. We have had very great success in our enterprises that called for money in the way of loans and guarantees, &c., and I have no doubt that with the tremendous expansion of business, which we are all now so pleased to observe, this great growth of Canada, we shall be able to handle these great enterprises in the future just as we have been able to handle great enterprises in the past. At the present moment we have rather heavy burdens upon us, and I am perhaps more anxious than some hon. gentlemen who have spoken to-night to think of the financial side. And so, while I

would give, on behalf of the government, my cordial sympathy and support to this movement and look forward to no distant day when it shall be seriously taken up, I say frankly I do not think it should be pressed to a decision at the present moment. It is one of the big things of Canada which we must do and do at an early date, but if we are asked to undertake it immediately, I frankly say that I do not think it is good finance, I do not think it is good politics, I do not think it is a wise project. I am sure my hon. friend from North Renfrew (Mr. G. V. White) who has given us so much valuable information on this subject, not only to-day, but in former sessions, will appreciate the position we take when we say that, desirable as this enterprise is, grand as it is, fascinating as it is to us all from these many points of view, no harm will come if we have to go a little slowly in the matter and see that our financial position is strong before we undertake this new and heavy burden.

Mr. SPROULE. The minister has suggested that the hon. member (Mr. G. V. White) should give him a memorandum of the papers he desires. I do not see how the member can be expected to know what papers he wants. He certainly, I presume, desires to have all not already brought down. I understood the Minister of Public Works to say that very few were brought down. My impression is a good many were because these papers have been moved for frequently in this House. There may be many which the hon. gentleman desires, but of which he knows nothing, because they are papers passed between the government and certain parties interested, and these I presume he desires to have.

Mr. PUGSLEY. Unless he and I disagree, everything will be brought down, but I am sure we shall be able to agree.

Mr. SPROULE. That would be much better, because I am sure the hon. member could not give a list of just what he wanted.

Motion agreed to.

On motion of Mr. Fielding, House adjourned at 11.35 p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, February 15, 1910.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

THE NAVAL SERVICE OF CANADA.

The House resumed the adjourned debate on the motion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the