

them from the head of the lakes and transported in their own cars to Montreal, Halifax or St. John. At the same time the Grand Trunk would not have had the same power that they are asking for to-day. Had parliament allowed them to build a line from Winnipeg, they could have built or secured running rights to the head of Lake Superior, and the people would have the advantage of the Canadian Pacific, the Grand Trunk, and the Mackenzie and Mann roads in competition, and practically it would not have cost the country a dollar. But that is a position that the gentlemen behind the Grand Trunk Pacific did not want. Why? Because it meant nothing in the way of railway construction. The Grand Trunk Railway Company would have taken in charge, itself, the work of betterment on its Midland division. There would have been no construction between the head of Lake Superior and Winnipeg. Then, they would have done what Mackenzie and Mann did, build over the prairie country without having anything from the government in money or in land. But there was nothing in that for the exploiter or grafter, nothing in it for the hungry railway contractor.

So we find looming up this proposition of Senator Cox and Senator Gibson and these other gentlemen. When the Grand Trunk people, Mr. Hayes and other gentlemen, saw they could not get a railway from North Bay westward they were driven into this alliance against which their own stockholders in the old country remonstrated, and they had to assure their stockholders in the old country that it was only a myth, something that would never be carried into effect. I am here to say now that in the light of the past, in view of the fact that water carriage transportation has been a success, if this road is ever built—and I am going to take the assurance of the Grand Trunk directors to their stockholders that practically it never will be built—if it ever is built, there would hardly be a bushel of grain carried over it. We will accept the statement of the Minister of the Interior that the bulk of the grain that is to be carried out of the Northwest will be carried over a mixed system of land and water transportation. Now in face of the fact that that grain is to be carried out of the Northwest by lines to the head of Lake Superior and there to come down by water in boats either to the Georgian Bay ports or Lake Huron ports, to be carried through the Welland canal on to Montreal, what is the sense, for what reason are the government embarking in such a gigantic enterprise as the expenditure of all these millions?

One thing is certain, that the government hope that this is going to tide them over the election. They are going into a fight which is announced for this year on the same principles that they fought the Remedial Bill in 1896. In the province of Quebec they gave the assurance that they were go-

ing to have a very strong Remedial Bill, a much stronger than the other administration could give; and in the province of Quebec it will be announced that this railway is going to be built beyond a doubt. In the province of Ontario it was announced that there would be no Remedial Bill; and so in the province of Ontario it will be announced next fall that there is to be no construction of this line beyond a point north of North Bay. That will be the policy adopted. In confirmation of that statement all the Liberal candidates in Ontario will point out that not a single cabinet minister from Ontario has had the temerity to rise in this House and advocate it. Of course it would not be expected that the Minister of Customs would rise, because the Minister of Customs went through two campaigns lately in the province of Ontario. He went into the riding of East Bruce and expounded to the people the benefits of this Grand Trunk Pacific. He got an answer there not to his liking. Then the Minister of Customs went into the riding of Lambton and endeavoured to justify the attitude of the government. Well, the answer he obtained there was equally distasteful to the Minister of Customs, and equally distasteful to the government. So my word for it, when the general campaign comes on in the province of Ontario every Liberal candidate will be announcing on every occasion that this railway is never going to be built any further than a point north of North Bay, and in justification of their statement they will say: did not you read the debates in the House? While it went on the Postmaster General was as mute and immovable as a sphinx. The Minister of Customs never opened his mouth; the Minister of Public Works was never heard from, and the Minister of Trade and Commerce never uttered a sentence or a syllable that would possibly tie him down in defence of this proposition. If they go a little further they will advance the argument the Postmaster General made the other day when he was confronted with some of his past utterances, that no government was bound by the utterance of any one member of it, that no cabinet could be bound by the utterances of any individual member. While on the one hand you see in the province of Ontario, at public meetings and on public hustings, the statement of the premier that this road is to be built through to the maritime provinces, these gentlemen will point to the fact that none of the ministers from Ontario ever advocated that proposition. The people will be told, too: If this government is sustained the Ontario ministers, when they go down to Ottawa, will assert themselves and will see that the line is not built any further than a point north of North Bay.

The other night, in closing the debate, the Premier made a little bid for his own support. I imagine that some of the ministers