

hereafter prevent any persons or companies from engaging in telegraphic enterprises, in competition with those lines which exist to-day. It is well known that one of the companies that received its charter under the law I referred to, has been, to use a common expression, "sold out." It now belongs to that great Wall street operator in New York, Jay Gould. The directors of the company in Canada are simply his servants, whom he simply pays so much a year for carrying out his orders. As long as the public is served by existing companies, and telegraph messages are transmitted at a cheap rate, I suppose it does not greatly concern us where the capital comes from, or where the management resides. But the fact that a company is in foreign hands ought not to be a reason why we should prevent other persons, residing in this country or elsewhere—whether their capital is to be obtained in New York or in England—from establishing telegraph lines in Canada if they choose. It seems to me the public interest requires that this matter should be open and free, that we should have competition, especially in view of the fact that a great struggle is going on between two rival telegraph companies in the United States to obtain a monopoly. We are not much concerned in that; but when we find gentlemen prepared to come forward and engage in competition with them, in case events should show that a profit may be derived from it, I cannot see why we should say: "there shall be no more Telegraph Companies in Canada," and that the people of Canada should submit to whatever treatment the two companies now in existence may give us. I think that is not in accordance with the opinion or sense of Parliament, and therefore, I move:

That Bill No. 54, entitled an Act to incorporate the Canadian Telegraph Company, be committed to the Standing Committee on Railways and Telegraph Lines, with instructions to reconsider the Bill and report the same to this House.

MR. CAMERON (North Victoria): I raise the question of order, as to whether notice of this motion should not be given. My reason in raising the question is, that the gentleman on whose motion the preamble was declared not to be proven, is not in his place at present, and I think it is only right that the reason upon which

the Committee thought fit to act should be stated to the House

MR. MACKENZIE: I do not think, in a matter of so much importance, it would be fair at this stage of the Session that the Bill should stand for the convenience of any member whoever he may be. I quite agree with the ground taken by the hon. member for Halton (Mr. Macdougall). The House has not hitherto been in the habit of considering, as a first principle in a Bill, whether it was to promote undue competition or not. I took that objection in the Committee myself. It has been our practice to allow free scope to competition in railways, telegraphs or any other object of this kind. The fact that we had already passed a Bill, this Session, to incorporate a telegraph company seemed to me conclusive that no ground for objection should be taken to another similar Bill. It is not, of course, proper to refer to what took place in the Committee, or I would refer to the reasons given, which could hardly, in my opinion, be called reasons.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD: The hon. gentleman might state what he, generally, has heard of objections to the Bill.

MR. MACKENZIE: I heard, for instance, in another place, respecting this Bill, that the names given were not of sufficient weight to justify us in considering any measure upon which they proposed competition. I differed entirely in that opinion; I think some of the best names in the country were there. It was also alleged that this Bill was sought for the purpose of forming a combination, which they could not do without having that Bill in their possession, as a threat to compel others to agree to their terms. That was the chief allegation, and, in fact, the only thing that could be called a reason that I heard against the passage of the Bill. The feeling, however, was so very strong in that quarter that it was found impossible to get more than two or three to express an adverse opinion. If Parliament had been in the habit of considering the question of competition, except incidentally, it would place the matter in a different light. I believe myself that there has been undue competition in railway building, and that, in some instances, it has prevented capital from being invested in more useful enterprises. Still