

it is to be hoped that they will muster in the next election and not leave us.

Now, it is a matter for some comment—although, as I said a few moments ago, we took third place in the contest at the polls—that the Conservatives secured within 13 per cent of the votes secured by my honourable friends now in office, notwithstanding the solid vote which they got in the province of Quebec, which we may eliminate from the contest, as that province seems to be out of it.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: And Nova Scotia too.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: The 114 or 115 representatives which my honourable friends have, represent a unit of 11,100, whereas those who sit on the Liberal-Conservative side represent a unit of 18,400. The Progressives represent a unit of 11,800. It will thus be seen that the Conservative members of the House of Commons practically represent a unit of nearly 75 per cent more than those supporting the Government.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Throughout the whole country?

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Yes, taking it as a whole. Furthermore, the vote recorded for the Liberal-Conservatives in all amounted to 971,502 as against 759,387 recorded in support of the Progressives. On the basis of the unit representation of the Liberal party, the Liberal-Conservative Opposition in Parliament would represent approximately ninety seats; so that, notwithstanding the support secured by my honourable friends opposite from the province of Quebec, in which a policy of extirpation was put forth as to the Conservative party, we really came out of the contest with almost as much credit as the Liberal party.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Everybody is satisfied.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: I simply point out these anomalies under our election laws by which it becomes manifest that our representative institutions are not as representative as they should be.

As I said a moment ago, there were no specially distinctive questions upon which the late Government was attacked at the late election, nor upon which the vote of the electorate was cast. That is to say, there was no distinctive issue except, perhaps, in the province of Quebec. I need not inform this House, because we are all familiar with the facts, that the transpor-

tation interests, the banking interests, and the power interests of the province of Quebec went in full force against the late Government, and instructions went forth that under no consideration must a supporter of the late Government be elected in that province.

It appears to my mind that, as the election very largely turned upon the action of the province of Quebec, we might ask ourselves, why this combined attitude of the transportation, banking and power interests, of that province? Why were they arrayed against the late Government? I need not say that it was on account of the policy of the late Government upon the railway situation; and it might not be out of place for me to review that question for a few moments without going too extensively into the figures involved.

I need scarcely say that from Confederation down to the present time the Government of Canada, no matter which side of politics it represented, has been faced with a railway question. It started at the time of Confederation—before that period, I might say. The Government of Canada before Confederation had to assist very substantially the Grand Trunk railway with an enormous sum of money; at the time of Confederation we had to assume the building of the Intercolonial; and we had to build a transcontinental line reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific for the purpose of completing the union with British Columbia. Hence one is not surprised that when the late Government came into office, and it was found that the National Transcontinental railway and the Grand Trunk Pacific railway had met financial difficulties and could not be completed without the intervention of the Government, there was nothing else for the late Government than to assume all responsibility incident to these operations and the taking over of the system.

Before the late Government came into office, the Laurier Government had not only committed itself to the building of the National Transcontinental and the Grand Trunk Pacific, but it had committed itself to the development of the Canadian Northern into a Transcontinental system, and it had placed the necessary legislation on the statute book declaring that to be the policy of the Government touching that road. We were therefore faced, before we were three years in office, with the necessity of dealing with the railway situation, and there was no alternative for the Government of the day, the Borden Government,