

Senate of Canada should know as much about this business as if we were going to put our own money into it. Then we would be able to say to the people of the country: "We put your money into a good thing, something that is required for the benefit of Canada."

Hon. A. B. GILLIS: I think it is extremely unfortunate that the Government should have so complicated this Bill as to make it practically impossible for us to get branch lines that are really needed, and that would not be bleeders but feeders for the Canadian National.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Cannot we simplify it?

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: Yes, by bringing in a Bill for each branch and putting specific items in the Estimates. Otherwise I do not think it is possible to get the branch lines of railways that are really needed in the West to help the settlers and to provide freight for the Canadian National Railways.

Take the Thunderhill branch, 69 miles in length. The estimated cost of that line is \$1,650,000. That is in a district that was settled more than 20 years ago. The line is supposed to lead into the city of Prince Albert. Fifteen or twenty years ago the country to be served by that line was settled by an excellent class of people, good Canadian farmers, and they were promised a railroad. They have been labouring under the difficulty of having to draw their grain from 30 to 60 miles to market. That is a case in which some redress should be provided, but not in a blanket Act which gives the Canadian National Board the power to usurp the functions of Parliament as far as voting money is concerned. I think the policy of this Bill is impossible. The branch I refer to is of sufficient importance, to my mind, to justify the Government in passing a special Act and including in the Estimates a special vote for its construction.

This is only one of the many branches in the Prairie Provinces that I might mention. There are many other branches included in this schedule which I am not going to criticize. So far as the western Provinces are concerned, I think I may safely say that any branch line that is built in the arable parts of the country will be a great source of revenue to the Canadian National Railways. For that reason I think the Government should pick out a few lines where the need is particularly urgent and should provide for them at the next session of Parliament. There is every prospect now of an excellent crop this year, and I think it is most unfortunate that the people to whom I have referred are to be

Hon. Mr. LYNCH-STANTON.

compelled to labour under these difficulties for a further period, and that we cannot devise some scheme to give them relief. With the other lines in the province of Saskatchewan I am not so familiar, but I think the Government should take this matter into consideration and if possible provide some remedy for those people who have suffered during all these years.

Hon. GEORGE GORDON: In case this Bill may not be referred to Committee of the Whole, I desire to make a few remarks on it. The honourable leader of the Government has very kindly intimated that each of us may have in mind some favourite road which he would like to see built. I select No. 6. I do so for the simple reason that, as I understand, is pretty nearly completed. I know that many months ago a contract was awarded for the construction of that road, and I know as well that it is usual for railway contractors to be paid. By this time the contractors on that line must have been paid a very substantial sum. If that is the case, why should item No. 6 of the Bill be presented to us in this way, as if no expenditure whatever had been made on that line? The item states: "Mileage already graded, O." I would like to ask the honourable leader of the Government; has not a considerable sum of money been expended on that road, and, if so, what is the amount?

Hon. Mr. McMEANS: It costs \$68,000 a mile.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: About \$150,000 has already been expended on it.

Hon. Mr. GORDON: Is that all?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: That is my information.

Hon. Mr. GORDON: And there is yet to be spent practically \$2,000,000? Well, if only \$150,000 has already been spent upon it, I will withdraw any accusation with reference to that line. There is another place in that district in which a road would suit me better.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Take No. 7.

Hon. Mr. GORDON: Like my honourable friend from Calgary, (Hon. Sir James Loughheed) I am interested in a certain place where I am desirous of seeing a road built.

I am of the opinion that this House must do one or other of two things with this Bill; that is, either accept it as a whole or reject it as a whole, and for my part I intend voting to reject it.