

We would then have merchants sending their grain to England by way of Halifax. To be sure the time occupied in forwarding the freight to Portland would be 24 hours shorter, but the price would be the same, and as Halifax is 36 hours nearer to England than Portland is, there would be 12 hours gained. Then I have great objection to going through a foreign country. If there happens to be any little jealousy between the two countries, they could easily, by not allowing goods to pass through in bond, stop our traffic by the short route altogether. We are talking about the benefits of a short line. I think we can lessen the distance as to time between Montreal and Halifax by several hours by making fewer stoppages. We now stop at Amherst to take our breakfast, and we likewise, in two hours, stop at Truro and take another breakfast. Now one breakfast is quite enough for any ordinary man, and as you stay 20 minutes at Truro, you could, by eating only one breakfast, shorten the distance on the Intercolonial Railway at least 12 miles.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—But freight does not take breakfast.

HON. MR. ALMON—I am talking of the passengers. There is a stop of three hours at Richmond, and that stoppage is equivalent to 60 miles. I am of opinion that if the Government instead of aiding this short line would buy the North Shore road and unite it with the Intercolonial railway and charge the same freight from Montreal to Halifax that is now charged from Montreal to Portland, you would then effectually, without expending any more money, make Halifax the winter port of the Dominion. It may be said that this is not the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce at Halifax. I am glad to be able to say, in the presence of the Senior member from Halifax, that the Chamber of Commerce does not represent the opinion of the commercial community of Halifax. There are parties there who use it more as a vehicle to abuse confederation and the Government than for any practical purpose. I will appeal, not merely to what has taken place in the past but what will take place when this question comes up before the chamber at Halifax. If any gentleman doubts my statement he will

only have to take the newspapers of that city and he will find them filled with abuse of confederation and the Government rather than with discussions of practical affairs. It is a political tool used by parties who intend to run the next election, and in addition to abusing the confederation and the Government, to abuse the two members who represent the city and the county in the House of Commons.

HON. MR. TRUDEL—It is questionable whether it is an advantage to speak at all at such a late period of the session, but I cannot allow this Bill to pass without making a few remarks. There are in this Bill two very important features, a provision to buy the North Shore Railway, and one to encourage the construction of a short line. I much regret to say that on both those important subjects my decided opinion is that this proposed legislation should not be adopted. I will not enter into the details of the arguments which might be used against the measure. I will only represent to the House that in my opinion it is a departure from the fixed principle which has been the foundation of the general policy of the Government for many years—that is to favor as much as possible national lines on Canadian territory. As to facilitating the purchase of the North Shore Railway, I may say the Bill does not go so far as to declare that the money shall be used to redeem the North Shore absolutely. Unless it is used for that purpose within a certain space of time it will, no doubt, be devoted to other purposes. Three years ago the North Shore Railway belonged to the Province of Quebec; it had been built at great expense by the province with a view to making it a portion of our great trans-continental highway, the Canadian Pacific Railway. In the spring of 1882 a great contest took place in our province, the local government deciding to sell the railway, contrary, I do not hesitate to say, to the desire of a majority of the Conservative party in the province. It was sold, against the wish of the party, and against the public interest. It is well known now, and it was known at the time of the sale, that the transaction gave certain private parties a clear profit of \$1,250,000. Strange to say, while at that time a majority of the leading men of the Con-