

basis where we do not have to pay out that money every year". I sat down and studied the situation and I found that the line was put down in the first instance by the Canadian Northern on the basis of getting it in there as cheaply as possible. They went through on the best gradient possible and, with respect to operations, our expense is much less than that of the Canadian Pacific Railways in the same area because their line has heavier grades—whereas we are down at the bottom of the mountain. The trouble is the whole darned mountain comes down on top of us.

I got the operating officials in and after a lengthy discussion I said: Now, I have heard all of your problems and what happens every year. You have shown me pictures and reports by the score but how much money would it take to put, in that very short area—only about forty-two miles—a good railway line? The worst area is, as I say, only about forty-two miles. I am told that to put in a line where we would be reasonably sure that we would not have trouble would cost \$150,000,000 to \$175,000,000. At that point I sat back and suggested that we take another look. I have not yet reached the stage in life where I think that \$150,000,000 is not a lot of money.

Now, you sit down, deliberately, and say that you will spend \$150,000,000 but you must also keep in mind that you are talking about a program that would take twenty or twenty-five years to complete. It is not something that could be done overnight.

Mr. MUTCH: It might stop snowing by then.

Mr. FULTON: You are referring to the Fraser canyon area?

Mr. GORDON: Yes. We have a great deal of difficulty every year with snow-slides, washouts and floods. For instance, right now we know that we are facing a probability—I was going to say a possibility but it is stronger than that—of further floods. What can we do? We can send out a certain amount of equipment, and make plans, but if there is going to be a flood there is nothing we can do to stop it. There is not a thing we can do to prevent very serious disruptions of service if we do get floods. We can help a little, but we cannot change the basic condition.

Mr. KNIGHT: If someone else wishes to proceed further I have no objection, but I want to raise another large general question. Mr. Adamson spoke of the deterioration and obsolescence of material. The thing I want to speak of is something more intangible and I think I can get it in under this last item on page 19.

Hon. Mr. CHEVRIER: I hope it is not a spiritual matter?

Mr. KNIGHT: The event may prove that. My point is on the matter of employee relations which I notice has been given the last position in the report on page 19. Also, with that, I would include public relations.

The CHAIRMAN: Before we go on to these specialized subjects are there any further general questions?

Mr. KNIGHT: This is general as you will see when I get through.

The CHAIRMAN: It appears to me that your question is directed towards a special subject which we will reach by going through the report page by page. I do not wish to curtail discussion but I want to do everything I can to facilitate the work of the committee.

Mr. KNIGHT: I think we are working at cross-purposes. As a matter of fact, my chief reason for bringing up the item is that I thought I could get it in here—otherwise I thought you might decide the discussion was too general.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, make a try.