

such certificates nor the Company in the performance of the work of construction and completion nor in the issue of its securities.

So that the information furnished to honourable gentlemen in the Bill itself, on page 3, is not to be relied upon at all. Section 7 says so. It is simply an estimate; and I would point out how distant the estimate is from the facts as we know them to be.

Now, this schedule makes provision for the construction of over a thousand miles of road—I think 1,011 miles to be exact. The estimate of the cost of constructing those 1,011 miles represents \$28,300,000—in other words less than \$28,000 a mile. Honourable gentlemen will recall that, in the building of the National Transcontinental, the then Minister of Finance, who is the present Minister of Finance, made an estimate as to what the cost would be; and it is rather an interesting coincidence that that gentleman who was then Minister of Finance, and made his famous prediction as to what the cost of the National Transcontinental would be, is to-day apparently playing the role of prophet and making a like prediction as to what the cost of these 1,011 miles will be.

The National Transcontinental was to have cost \$24,000 a mile, or in all \$61,000,000. It was established on sworn evidence that it cost at last \$89,000 a mile. That was twenty years ago, when costs were very much below, one might say at least 50 per cent below, what they are to-day. And yet we are asked to accept the information furnished by the Government in this Bill, and to vote this money on the strength of the representation that is made to us that this thousand miles of road can be built for \$28,000,000, or in other words, \$28,000 a mile. We are safe, honourable gentlemen, in concluding that this road cannot be built for less than the Transcontinental cost twenty years ago, which was \$89,000 a mile. In other words, honourable gentlemen, this thousand miles will cost at least \$100,000,000. Any honourable gentleman who is interested in the building of public works, particularly the building of railways, can easily satisfy himself, from what he knows of costs to-day, that this thousand miles of road cannot be built at less than \$100,000,000. Yet without any information at all before us, we are asked by this confiding Government to believe that this thousand miles of road can be built for \$28,000,000, and to trust the present Board of the National Railways to carry out the project.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The honourable gentleman is making an error. I have here a statement giving detailed information regard-

ing each line. I did not desire to read 15 or 20 pages of foolscap describing all the lines and explaining the necessity for their construction. I thought that we might examine each line in committee to see what merit there is in the project. May I draw my honourable friend's attention to the Okanagan and Lumby Branch, on which there has been expended \$5,330,000? The estimated amount required for the completion of it is \$2,307,000. Here is the respectable sum of \$5,330,000 of Canadian money invested on this line.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: I suppose it is in operation.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: No; there is not a mile in operation. It is only graded. Now the question is, will we try to save those 5½ millions by spending \$2,307,000 on construction?

Hon. W. B. ROSS: When was it graded?

Hon. Mr. REID: May I ask the honourable leader a question?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I am mentioning simply the case of one important district in which the Government has spent 5½ millions. There is a detailed statement about this Railway, with the whole history of it. I hope I was not expected to occupy two hours in reading a statement explaining in detail the necessity of each of these branches on the 2nd reading of the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: It would not be too long a statement on an expenditure of \$100,000,000.

Hon. Mr. REID: Does the honourable leader of the Government say that \$5,000,000 have already been spent on 100 miles?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: So I am informed.

Hon. Mr. REID: That is, \$50,000 a mile have already been spent on 100 miles, and \$2,000,000 more are required. It is evident that it will cost \$70,000 a mile.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: As my honourable friend knows, that is in a mountain district.

Hon. Mr. REID: Yes, but a great deal of it is new road, and the new road is estimated to cost \$28,000 a mile.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: But my honourable friend built that road—or it was under his supervision that it was built.