

Would it not be a benefit to every mile of country through which the Intercolonial passes if this proposition which the hon. member for Hants (Mr. Russell) says the hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) wants to carry out, were possible? The hon. member slights and flouts the proposition of the leader of the opposition. He says:

Did anybody ever hear of a proposition like that seriously propounded? Did anybody ever hear of a proposition by which a party having grain to sell should be compelled to route that grain by any particular way, send it through any particular port or to deal with it in any other way than his own business judgment told him would be desirable in his own interest? Surely not. That would be paternalism run mad.

The proposition to build a road from Moncton to Winnipeg and bear the entire cost, and to bear three-quarters of the entire cost of a road from Winnipeg to the Pacific, is the acme, the very height of statesmanship, but the proposition of the hon. the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden), that in view of the enormous advantages which are to accrue to the Grand Trunk Pacific by its agreement with the government, every pound of freight originating in the west and carried over the Grand Trunk Pacific should find an exit from Canada by Canadian maritime ports is paternalism run mad. If the hon. the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) desires an agreement of that kind, he is the benefactor, he is not the enemy, of the people of the maritime provinces or of the interests of maritime ports; and I am satisfied that when the people of the maritime provinces know that they are being deceived and misled as to the position which our leader has taken in this matter, they will show their appreciation of his proposition and will send him back here to administer the affairs of this country with a very much larger following from the provinces down by the sea than he now has the honour of leading. If, instead of building the road from Moncton or Quebec to North Bay, an agreement were made whereby it would be a condition of the enormous advantages which we are giving to this new railway that they should hand over all their export trade from Manitoba and the west to the Intercolonial at Quebec, we would save the cost of construction of that portion of the eastern section, and would provide a vast amount of additional traffic for the Intercolonial Railway which will now be lost to it for ever. Hon. gentlemen have shown their appreciation of Hon. Mr. Blair by appointing him to the most important position in Canada ever occupied by a Canadian, a position where he can by the faithful discharge of his duties exercise more influence for the relief of the producers, the consumers, the exporters and the importers of this country than any other man in Canada. The hon. the premier told us he believed him to be qualified for the position, and yet

Mr. CLARKE.

the proposition which the hon. member for Hants (Mr. Russell) thought was paternalism run mad is not considered such a mad proposition by the Hon. Mr. Blair, because in last year's discussion on this question of exchange of traffic he said:

When this question was being discussed in the Railway Committee and when I was stating my objection to it, I took occasion to ask Mr. Hays, the manager of the Grand Trunk Railway, whether in his opinion there would be the slightest difficulty on his part or on the part of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company in making a fair, and reasonable, and just arrangement with the Intercolonial Railway for the carriage of all traffic they might have to handle from Quebec to Halifax and St. John, and Mr. Hays' answer was: Not the slightest difficulty in the world. Now, Sir, under that arrangement the traffic could be carried as advantageously for the Intercolonial Railway and as beneficially for all concerned; nay, more advantageously and more beneficially than it could be carried by any new railway that could possibly be constructed or by any other means than that of the Intercolonial Railway itself.

That is the opinion of Hon. Mr. Blair. In his statement Mr. Blair also condemns the precipitancy which characterized the making of this contract with the Grand Trunk Pacific. He shows that undue haste was exercised, that the interests that ought to have been safeguarded were not safeguarded by the government, that the interests of the Intercolonial Railway might have been preserved by the government if care, caution and forethought had been exercised. This is what he says:

I venture to say that suggestion has not been made to the Grand Trunk Pacific. I do not think it has ever been made to Mr. Hays other than as I made it in the Railway Committee of the House of Commons. I think if it had been made to him he would have readily availed of it; he would have gladly accepted some such plan as that, so as not to be compelled, under lease or otherwise, to operate this line of railway which is now projected. All that would be necessary to do would be to embody a clause in this Bill, or if you like you could come to an agreement before you committed the government irrevocably to the undertaking; you could have come to an agreement with the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and have the matter settled finally and definitely for all time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the proposition of the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) involves something that Hon. Mr. Blair suggested might have been done; and if as he says it could have been done very easily, and if as a result of doing it we would have avoided the construction of another road from Quebec to Moncton and would have given to the Intercolonial the traffic which will come over the new road—if the leader of the opposition is aiming in that direction, if he is trying to bring about a condition of things such as Mr. Blair said it was possible to have brought about, I ask hon. gentlemen is he not the benefactor of the people of the maritime provinces, and is he not supporting and maintaining mari-