

the expenditure by Canada of one hundred and odd millions of money in order to get relief. I do not think that there is any such question to-day to be feared as the abrogation of the bonding privilege. The period when we might have feared it has long since passed away; and whatever may be the merits or demerits of this government scheme which we are now discussing, I do trust that no man's judgment is going to be influenced in favour of what he would otherwise consider a defective and unjustifiable measure because this bogey of the abrogation of the bonding privilege has been raised.

The next leading proposition which the hon. gentleman presented was that we need an all-Canadian transcontinental line from ocean to ocean. Let me again quote the hon. gentleman's language, in order that I may be entirely accurate:

We ask parliament to assent to this policy because we believe—may, we feel certain, and certain beyond a doubt—that in so doing we give voice and expression to a sentiment, a latent but deep sentiment, which is to-day in the mind, and still more in the heart, of every Canadian, that a railway to extend from the shores of the Atlantic ocean to the shores of the Pacific ocean, and to be, every inch of it, on Canadian soil, is a national as well as a commercial necessity. That such a road must be built, that it is, in the language which I have used, a national and a commercial necessity, that it is a corollary of our status as a nation, that it is a requisite of our commercial development, is a proposition to which, up to this moment, I have heard no dissent.

The necessary implication from that argument is that a road from ocean to ocean through Canadian territory does not now exist; and if we are to accept this inference, if we are to allow it to influence our judgment, then we will be misled—misled unquestionably, although I would be sorry to convey the impression that I thought my right hon. friend would wilfully attempt to mislead this parliament or the country. But certainly, if parliament were to accept this implication, it would be misled beyond all doubt and question. What constitutes an all-Canadian national line? Does it mean a railway line spanning the continent from ocean to ocean and owned entirely by one corporation? Well, we have such a line now. We have even, I might almost say, got two such lines. Then why should we be influenced by this implication? We ought not to be influenced by it. If that is the sole necessity, and my right hon. friend said that were it not for this question of the bonding privilege he would not now be asking this parliament to assent to this proposition of a transcontinental road.

Finding the reasons assigned in support of the proposition inadequate, finding the ground giving way and the foundation dropping out, what is to be the outcome of the measure itself, if it is to be dealt with as similar measures, under other circumstances, would be dealt with by any de-

liberative body? The line, my right hon. friend claims, is both a national and a commercial line, but yet he says it is not a commercial line in the sense that you are to count on a profit or loss. Well, Sir, what is a commercial line if it is not a line constructed according to the dictates of commercial needs and which involves, necessarily and inevitably, the idea of profit or loss? You may build a sentimental line, but if so, tell the people that it is a line which you are building for sentimental purposes. Or, if you are building it for commercial purposes, say so. But my right hon. friend does not seem to be willing to consider it entirely the one or the other. It is a compound of both. He says it is not, in the ordinary sense, a commercial line, but is an all-Canadian line. Well, unless there be some pressing need for it, I do not see why the people of this country should be saddled with an obligation of \$100,000,000 of money and an addition to their liability, as I shall show, of an amount exceeding that. Unless there be something behind which has not been disclosed and which renders it necessary, I can see no reason now for the construction of this proposed national line. Both the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian Northern Railway are national lines in the widest acceptance of the term. They do not traverse the whole country from ocean to ocean, but if you will look across the border, I think it will give you some difficulty to point to any transcontinental railway there in the sense mentioned by the right hon. gentleman. You cannot find any railway in that country which starts from the Atlantic and ends at the Pacific, and which is under one control. I do not know of any. Their great lines east and west meet about the centre of the continent, and are the result of a process of development. Our American neighbours have not been trying to perform any spectacular feat by spending a large amount of money unnecessarily. They have done what the business needs of the country called for. Less than that we ought not to do; more than that we would be wrong in doing.

These are the four chief reasons which I gather from a careful reading of the right hon. gentleman's address why this measure should commend itself to our approval. But there is another, a general reason, which he gave. The country, he says, is crying out for another transcontinental railway. Mr. Speaker, my ears have been open, I have been a willing listener to any demand of this kind, and I am bound to say that I have not heard any great outcry for another transcontinental line from ocean to ocean. I do not know where the cry was made that it reached others. It was not made, at all events, so that it reached me.

I may have occasion, before concluding my remarks, to refer to this question again, and therefore will pass from it for the moment. Those who have been criticising this