

Canadian National Railways

from New Brunswick. Will tenders be called for the construction of this branch line? Will this project be commenced at an early date after the necessary authorization is granted by this parliament? Can the minister advise as to the approximate time that will be required to construct this line?

Again I wish to say very briefly but nevertheless sincerely that the people of the constituency which I represent and the people of all parts of New Brunswick are pleased that we are making some advances in the mining field. It is going to mean a great deal to the economy of the province. I trust they will be able to increase their industrial and mining output. We look for good things from this mining area, and we feel grateful that the government has seen fit to assist by providing a mode of transportation for this development.

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Chairman, I too, am very glad to support this resolution which the minister has brought forward. During the first quarter of this century nearly every parliament spent some time in a discussion of the construction of branch lines, but unfortunately during the past 30 years very few branch lines have been constructed.

I am sure it is a matter of a good deal of satisfaction to all hon. members to find that important developments are taking place in different parts of Canada. I am convinced that people in all provinces are glad to know that New Brunswick has this new important industrial development, and the construction of this branch line is merely an indication of the importance of this industry to the area.

I was hoping that the minister might have been able to include in this resolution some reference to a branch line in Manitoba from Mafeking across to Durban. I understand a proposal is being considered to move materials on the Canadian National Railways to Regina in connection with the establishing of a cement industry. I wonder if the minister could make some comment on that when he is answering questions.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman, I wish to say a few words in connection with this resolution, because it seems to me that this involves more than the construction of the railway itself. Inherent in the motion now before us is a recognition of the brightening picture in New Brunswick and the Atlantic provinces. There is also the fact that this resolution in itself gives an opportunity to express the sentiments of hon. members of this house in regard to the obligation that rests upon the government of Canada and the people of Canada generally to do everything they can to assist the economic and industrial development of the Atlantic provinces.

[Mr. McWilliam.]

In this case, as has already been pointed out, the railway is not long. By Canadian standards it is a very short line, 22 miles. It is an important railway, however, for the people of the province of New Brunswick and particularly for those living in the area which this railway will serve. I should think that in addition to its practical importance in assisting in the movement of ores and other raw material from the area it will serve, there is the encouragement it will give to others in that province and elsewhere to seek new opportunities for expanding the economic and industrial as well as maritime activities of that great province.

One of the things I wish to make very clear is that so far as I am aware no responsible Canadian has suggested at any time that we do not welcome investment from the United States. There are those who have been seeking to build up a straw man in order to knock him over. There are others who have sought to interpret a sound and legitimate argument in regard to an emphasis on Canadian development as evidence of a desire that funds should not come into this country from the United States. That is a known fiction. Only yesterday a prominent Canadian made a speech—

Mr. Lesage: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order—

Mr. Drew: I am glad the minister has his crystal ball, because I have not even started the sentence.

Mr. Lesage: Mr. Chairman, the point of order is to the effect that the Leader of the Opposition is now discussing the broad issue of United States investment in Canada on a resolution which is very specific.

This is a resolution which says:

...it is expedient to introduce a measure to authorize and to provide for the construction by the Canadian National Railway Company—

—of a branch line in New Brunswick. I do not see how the Leader of the Opposition can be in order when he discusses the broad subject of United States investment in Canada on such a resolution.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman, I am not concerned with the fact that the minister cannot see it. What I am concerned about is the fact that this is entirely in order. Quite properly there has already been discussion of the fact that funds from the United States have been responsible for creating the need for this branch line. I am pointing out that this is one of the natural advantages which flow from investment of that kind, and I am relating my comments directly to what has already