

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: Will the honourable gentleman answer the question?

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: There is no doubt my honourable friend is quite right. What we have spent is gone. For my part I cannot see why, even within the next generation, any corporation or group would wish to take over, even as a gift, this railway which has deficits of \$100,000,000. What my honourable friend says is quite true, but it has nothing to do with the question.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: No?

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: My argument is that the electors of this country must be constantly reminded of the fact that they have invested a colossal amount of money in this enterprise, and that every year that amount is increased by the sum of \$100,000,000. The credit of Canada cannot stand that drain much longer. Therefore we must seize every possible opportunity to impress the true situation upon the public. If we do not give the facts in the Canadian National's statement we shall be neglecting our duty towards the proprietors of that system, the people of Canada, who are subjected to an annual tax to meet the deficit. It makes no difference whether we could find a purchaser for the road or not, or whether the road is ever sold at all.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: Does it make any difference whether we keep the road?

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: That makes no difference at all to the duty that faces us now, the urgent duty to impress upon our people the necessity of seeking some solution of our railway problem. Perhaps if the present Government were informed of a strong public opinion upon the subject it would be more eager to find a solution than it seems to be.

Without further remarks I wish to propose that section 11 of the Bill be amended by the addition of the following words:

and as a footnote to the balance sheet the aggregate amount of the proprietor's equity and of the Dominion Government's contribution to meet deficits, with a supporting schedule giving details of such amount.

The whole section, if so amended, would read:

The accounts of the National Railway System shall be stated as of January first, nineteen hundred and thirty-seven, and thereafter, so as to show the proprietor's equity as defined by this Act, and as a footnote to the balance sheet the aggregate amount of the proprietor's equity and of the Dominion Government's contribution to meet deficits, with a supporting schedule giving details of such amount.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: Did my honourable friend say "contribution" or "contributions?"

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: It is in the singular. Does my honourable friend want to make it plural?

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: I was not sure that I heard correctly.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: Contributions have been so numerous that the word certainly should be in the plural.

May I just add a few words? I do hope and trust that the Minister will see his way clear to accept this amendment. The footnote would not affect the statement at all. The effect of it is what it would be if it were simply worded, "For the history back of this statement, see the schedule attached." I submit that the footnote would fulfil a very useful purpose.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: May I ask whether the contributions referred to are those listed in all these pages attached to the Bill?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: There would need to be simply a schedule containing what the amendment says. It might be necessary to show what is shown at the end of the Bill; I am not sure.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: I presume that would have to be shown.

Hon. RAOUL DANDURAND: Honourable members, I would ask my honourable friend from Montarville (Hon. Mr. Beaubien) not to move just yet the amendment which he has suggested, for I am rising now to tell him how far the Government would be disposed to go towards meeting his wishes. I will preface that statement with a few remarks.

My honourable friend desires to have included on the balance sheet of the Canadian National a footnote and schedule showing the financial history of the road so far as can be indicated by Canadian Government contributions to date. He says that his object—and perhaps it is his only object—in wishing to have this information shown is to impress upon the people the vastness of the public investment in this road, so that they will demand that something be done to put an end to our railway expenditures. My answer is that, in accordance with section 24 of this Bill, the public accounts of Canada will have to contain a complete statement of all assistance given by the Dominion Government to any railway. This section was amended in our committee to provide for even more detailed information than it called for when the Bill reached us from the other House. So if this measure is passed, the benevolence of Canada towards all railways—towards the Canadian Pacific, for instance, as well as to-