

Bob Bartlett, and other men who have spent many years in the Arctic, should be asked to go up there, stay one or two years, and make proper surveys, inquiring into the whole situation and investigating the advisability and the feasibility of this route. In that way the government would get information that we have not got now. I know practically nothing about the project except what I have read and what I have heard from Captain Bartlett, and others, who have voyaged for years in the Arctic and worked in the Hudson bay, and who have made statements to me which I have given to the House this afternoon. I would suggest that before spending any further large sums of money qualified engineers and qualified seamen, used to Arctic work should go up there and make a thorough inquiry into the whole situation, and then report to the government. Then it will be possible for us to discuss the matter in an intelligent manner. At present we cannot do this.

Mr. ROBERT FORKE (Brandon): I am glad the hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Duff) closed his speech in the manner in which he did. He admitted that he did not know the exact facts of the case. Nevertheless, he maintained that it was unnecessary to go any further into the matter as he was already satisfied that the strait was closed the whole year round. My hon. friend added that he had the results of investigations to prove it. Now, if his contentions are correct I do not see why this debate should proceed any further.

I think perhaps he is right in saying that a very close study of this question should be made by the members of this House. Perhaps the members more directly interested in the matter have already made considerable study of the whole question, and for many years it has been described on the one side as a route feasible and on the other side as a route very difficult, but I have never until to-day heard the statement made that at no time of the year was the route feasible. I have always understood that there was no doubt about at least two months of the year. I had the privilege of looking over a great many charts not very long ago, comparing the voyages of the boats in and out, from Sydney and other eastern ports to Hudson bay, and I did not find in any one of these charts any great difficulty at any time—in fact no difficulty during two months or so. I believe it is correct to say that the Hudson bay route is feasible for at least two months of the year. The question then would be: Is it a feasible or a right project to go on with this work on the supposition that we have

only navigation for two months in the year? It has been discussed pro and con for a great many years. I would like to read a short extract from a speech delivered in 1908 by Sir Wilfrid Laurier at Niagara Falls, where he stated:

We have undertaken the construction of another railway, the Hudson bay railway. We have come to the conclusion that the time to build this railway is now, not to-morrow, but now.

That is a long time ago. On September 22, 1908, the Hon. Clifford Sifton, now Sir Clifford Sifton, speaking at Brandon, said:

Now we come to the latest development and indeed the best is still to come. The prime minister proposes to build for these provinces the Hudson Bay Railway. (Loud cheers). That pronouncement was a very material factor in inducing me to become a candidate for this constituency in this election, because I felt, and feel now, that the time has come when we men from the west have succeeded in proving that a Hudson bay railway is no mere chimera—no foolish project, but one which the people of the West are bound to see carried into effect, and the time to do it is now.

Fifteen years ago the people of Canada and of the West were convinced that it was no mere chimera, that it was a feasible project, and now we find ourselves debating as seriously as ever the question as to whether the project should be carried on or given up. When we realize that two different governments have investigated this project, have pronounced it feasible, and have declared that it should be carried on, that its completion was only deferred on account of war conditions, that \$20,000,000 has already been spent upon it, is it reasonable that we should now come to the conclusion that the work should be stopped and that nothing more should be done?

It has been discussed again and again by the public men and parliaments of this country, both Dominion and provincial. The matter has been so well discussed and so well placed before the House by the mover (Mr. Knox) and the seconder (Mr. Bird) that I really cannot add very much to what has been said. However, I would like to point out again the necessity of some other outlet than the one which we have at present for the products of the western provinces. It is needless for me to repeat, but I sometimes think cannot be too often repeated, that we will have tremendous resources in those western provinces when they are properly developed. We have realized during recent years the difficulties and disadvantages from which we suffer on account of being located in the centre of the continent, where transportation has become the one great problem which we must and shall overcome. It seems to me that the Hudson bay route as