

nor yet prevented from doing justice, if we think justice demands any action, by being told that we are conceding improperly the demands of the Province, as we were told in the case of Nova Scotia. The hon. gentleman says there are various causes of discontent, and these should all have appeared in the Speech. Among other things he says it was very improper to reserve the lands lying in the mile belt; and yet the hon. gentleman, forgetting that portion of his speech, attacked the Government afterwards for making too rapid progress in railway construction and for building the road so quickly that the population became scattered. The hon. gentleman urges that the people should not be allowed to scatter all over the North-West, but should be kept in one place, all of which would have been accomplished if his railway policy had been carried out. If we had only had the water-stretches system and the vigorous action of the Sir W. P. Howland Syndicate, then the hon. gentleman would have had what he wanted, not the scattering of a vigorous population all over the country, but the concentration of people in one place. They would have been compelled to have hung round Winnipeg, to have bought the land held by Winnipeg speculators at speculators' prices; they would not have been allowed to isolate themselves, for there would have been no railway to have carried them out to Brandon, Regina, Moose Jaw, or Calgary. The few people who would have gone to the country would have been obliged, I say, to have remained near Winnipeg for want of railway communication. The hon. gentleman would then have been satisfied; all his anticipations would have been realized. Instead of a population rushing in, 25,000, 50,000 and 100,000, they would have gone in in few numbers under the wonderful management, great foresight and vigorous administration of hon. gentlemen opposite. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman says he objected, and objects now, to the policy of locking up the mile belt. In the first place, both his Government and our Government were pledged that the North-West should pay the cost of its own railway. We saw and felt that there was no reason why the taxpayers of the Maritime Provinces, or of the old Province of Canada should, out of their own pockets, pay for railway construction in the North-West. Those hon. gentlemen felt, as we felt, that in order to develop that great country, we should make an advance, borrow money and loan it to the North-West, which was rich enough when its resources were developed to repay principal and interest for the advance which they wished Parliament to make. We did ask Parliament to make the grant. Parliament made the grant, but under a solemn pledge given by myself and my colleagues, that we believed and knew that by a proper and vigorous administration of the affairs of that country, not one farthing would be taken out of the pockets of the rest of Canada, and that the North-West should pay for and build its own railway. In pursuance of that policy, Parliament, in its wisdom, not aside 100,000,000 acres of land for the purpose of repaying to the rest of Canada the temporary advance of \$:5,000,000 to build that great road. In carrying out that policy we were obliged, of course, to take care that while opening up the country and providing amply sufficient areas of land for all settlers, the plan should be carried out so that old Canada should not be obliged to be out of pocket ultimately. With respect to the mile belt, being then Minister of the Interior, adopted, to a very great extent, the advice and suggestions of my hon. friend who has just spoken. My hon. friend said—it will be found in *Hansard*, but I have not *Hansard* before me, for I am not a collector of speeches like the hon. gentleman or like my hon. friend behind me—but I remember his remark well, and I am quite sure he will not deny it—that while every settler should have the right to get his homestead, there was no reason why he should become a millionaire, and Government should take great care that

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD.

town sites and valuable spots along the line should be sold at their value for the purpose of forming a fund to build the railway. The hon. gentleman pressed strongly upon the House the propriety, expediency and justice of selling the land along the line, so far as town sites were concerned, certainly, for the purpose of building the road. Everybody who has gone through the country—I have not had that experience—knows that from Red River to Calgary there are few points which nature indicates as being certainly the site of a town. The country is one vast prairie and there are only one or two points marked out by nature, I say, as future town sites, and as a general rule it is mere accident as to whether a place becomes a town or remains a mere rural section. It would therefore be quite impossible for the Government to find out where the town sites would most likely be. But there was another reason, which I had occasion to elaborate to some extent last Session. When the boom to which the hon. gentleman has referred prevailed in the North-West, there was a rush of speculators all along the line, and there was great danger of the honest and *bond fide* settler, who wanted to obtain a homestead in the vicinity of the railway, being crowded out by paid agents of speculators who sent out hired myrmidons by the dozen and even by the hundred to put up false, fictitious and fraudulent evidence of settlement. While the boom existed it was quite impossible to decide between the honest settler and the pretended settler in the pay of a speculator. These paid agents were scattered all over the country, as was admitted by the hon. member from Manitoba who spoke last year. Then men, under the pretence of being honest settlers, went upon land and put up a fence or threw up a few rods of soil in a perfunctory manner; these were the paid servants of speculators who were receiving a commission in addition to monthly wages, and there was danger that land would remain in the same state as the land in the immediate vicinity of Winnipeg remains, namely, held by speculators for advanced prices, greatly to the loss of that section of the country, and to the disadvantage of the city itself as well as to the honest settler. With respect to the land between the railway and the boundary line, not one single honest settler, not one single *bond fide* immigrant who has settled on any one lot, has been dispossessed, not one man has been disturbed. There must have been some little uncertainty in men's minds while a reserve existed; but that must, and will exist until the whole country is settled. That section was the most profitable and valuable portion of the whole of the North-West; that was the portion we had desired and intended to commence selling for the purpose of recouping the loan made by the people of Canada to the people of the North-West. Sir, that boom is over, the inflation was excessive; the reaction was correspondingly great for a time. I am happy to believe that is over now. I am happy to believe that prices have resumed their normal condition, that land is now held at fair prices, not at fictitious or speculative values. The moment the time came when the Government were satisfied, when the Department of the Interior had the evidence before it that the time had passed for speculators to rush in and put on the land agents, and thus procure a fraudulent settlement, and that those speculators had enough to do at home to meet their engagements without seizing on new lands and dispossessing *bond fide* settlers, that moment the Government, not a moment too soon and I do not think too late, withdrew their reservation. And what is the consequence? The consequence is that the real settler now goes in, not the agent or the speculator, not the land jobber or the land shark, but the real, *bond fide* settler, and whether he comes from the Mother Country or from older Canada he is certain to find his homestead, to choose his homestead, to enjoy his homestead. That, Sir, is my answer to the attack made on the policy