

portion of that information, and let us understand what the reasons are which have induced the government to adopt this policy. Then, I think we should have all estimates of engineers, and the details and data upon which those estimates are based. We should have all documents showing the character of the construction which is to be adopted—what the gradients will be, and what opportunity there will be of operating the line economically, particularly from Moncton to Winnipeg. We should have an estimate of the cost per mile of the mountain section, the prairie section, and the eastern section. We should have a statement as to each of these sections, showing the population, exclusive, of course, of cities, residing, we will say, within twenty miles of the proposed location of the line. We should have an estimate of the earnings per mile and the operating expenses per mile of each section. We should know what portion of the traffic, if any, now controlled by the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian Northern Railway, is expected to be carried by this railway. We want to know upon what data the government rely in assuming that this railway will give relief to the congested districts west of Lake Superior. I would like to know what the government's views are as to what proportion of the traffic which will originate in the district through which this railway will pass in the west is expected to be carried by an all-rail route, and what proportion is expected to be deposited in elevators at Fort William and Port Arthur, for the purpose of being carried to the seaboard in the way in which the greater part of the traffic is carried at the present time. I assume that the government have investigated and considered all these matters, and are prepared to bring down some information upon them. I would like also to have an estimate of the rates at which this railway is expected to carry traffic from points as far west as Port Arthur and Fort William to St. John and Halifax, because if this road is to relieve the congestion in the west it can only do so by competing with lines already in existence; and the government have surely not embarked in the enterprise without considering what rates can be established and carried out. I would like the government also to place on the Table of the House all information of experts with regard to this line, if such information has been laid before them. I presume that they have acted on such information, because at the beginning of the session they proposed to appoint a transportation commission and to act on its views. They have evidently not acted on the views of that commission, and whatever expert opinions they have acted on should be laid before parliament. I would also like to have, if there be such, all demands and resolutions for the establishment of this line or any portion of it, laid on the Table

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax).

of the House, in order that we may know whether there has been any popular demand placed before the government for the construction of this line, in whole or in part.

Now, I have had to deal with this question along very general lines. That is not my own fault; it is the fault of the attitude of the government, in not allowing me any means of preparation for this debate tonight. I, therefore, apologize to the House for the very partial and ineffective manner in which I have dealt with this question. This seems to be a project into which, as the right hon. gentleman says himself, he has entered without deliberation, and against the advice of that member of his cabinet who had the greatest experience in these matters. It is an enterprise into which he has entered, if the ex-Minister of Railways (Hon. Mr. Blair) is to be believed, without any surveys or definite information which might place the government in a position to judge of the advisability of building a line which will cost an enormous sum to this country. Let me add that while the right hon. gentleman tells us that no lands whatever are to be granted to this company, nevertheless I find in clause 46 of this agreement the following provision:

The government shall procure to be granted to the company, in so far as the same are vested in His Majesty in right of the Dominion of Canada, such lands as may be required for the right of way of the western division, and for all stations, station grounds, workshops, buildings, yards and appurtenances required for the construction and working thereof, and shall also procure to be granted to the company, upon such terms as may be agreed upon, in so far as the same are so vested in His Majesty, such lands fronting upon and covered by navigable waters touched by the line of the railway as, in the judgment of the government, may reasonably be required for the use of the company in connection with its operations. The right of the company to obtain such lands without compensation shall cease when the said division is constructed and equipped as required by paragraph 29 hereof.

The language of that section is pretty comprehensive. While it does not give to the company any lands for the purpose of sales, nevertheless it will have the effect of vesting in the company without charge very considerable portions of the government domain in the North-west.

The proposal which the right hon. gentleman has submitted to this House seems to me ill-advised. It seems to me a project which indicates, on the very face of it, that it has been entered into without due deliberation, and having regard to the fact that we are asked to take it up at the conclusion of this session, without any details or information laid on the Table up to the present, and having regard to the further fact that there can be no assurance, except the right hon. gentleman's own suggestion, that it will have the effect of either relieving the con-