

fit for nothing and that Hudson strait is not navigable, but when they are asked for proof they point to a report made in 1917 by an engineer who was there when nothing was doing and made but one trip by water. This same man gave evidence before the Senate committee in 1920, among other witnesses, and we all know the report made by the Senate.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre said last night he would like to have an expert commission investigate the matter; he wanted expert evidence. Is not that exactly the kind of propaganda which has been delaying the construction of the Hudson Bay railway all along? Whom would that commission be composed of? He suggested it should include engineers, shipping men, grain men and others.

May I point out the nature of the evidence given before the Senate committee, upon which the report was based? They took the evidence of a sergeant of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who had been in that country for many years; Mr. F. C. T. O'Hara, Deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce; Mr. J. G. Desbarats, Deputy Minister of Naval Service; Captain Frederick Anderson of the Hydrographic branch, Naval Service; D. W. McLachlan; Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the Arctic explorer; Captain Norman E. Freakley, who had been in the Hudson's Bay service since 1898, sailing the bay; Captain Bernier, the Arctic explorer, sent specially to Hudson bay by the government; W. P. Anderson, of the Marine Department; Lance Corporal White, of the mounted police; Edward E. Prince, Dominion Commissioner of Fisheries; Mr. John L. Payne, statistician, Department of Railways and Canals; Hon. Frank Cochrane, who went to Hudson bay himself; W. G. Walton, a missionary; J. B. Tyrrell, a mining engineer; J. W. Tyrrell, a civil engineer; Mr. E. E. Clawson, Department of Marine and Fisheries, and others. All these men had been at the bay personally and were as well qualified in their own branches as anyone who could be selected by this government. Yet my hon. friend says there is not sufficient data and information. After hearing the evidence of these men the Senate made a report which fully justified the government in going ahead. It must also be remembered that in 1912, when it was decided to go ahead with this matter, the then Minister of Railways personally went to Hudson bay. For several centuries men have been doing business there. There are records dating back to 1740 showing the nature of the country, the feasibility of the route and all that is required.

Before I go into some of the objections which have been made I would just like to say that I was very grateful to the minister for the information he gave, but that information was disappointing to me as it will be to a great many other people. In the first place I think this House is entitled to know the exact condition of the system from someone who has made a personal examination. It is hard to believe after the appropriations that have been voted almost every year by this House, running up to \$300,000 in some years, that the system should be so badly run down that it requires \$3,000,000 to put it into shape. Mind you, I am not finding fault with the principle of first repairing the existing track. I think that is only sound business, and that it will decrease the expense in connection with further construction. But when we are asked to vote an amount of \$3,000,000 I think this House is entitled to know that it is not an estimate made by some person sitting at a desk here in Ottawa or in the Department of Railways and Canals. I think the House is entitled to that information. I asked for it yesterday, and it seems to me that it should be made available. But that is not the only disappointment. I am not going to go over all the promises of construction that have been made, but during the last year both parties made specific promises to the people of the west. The promise of the Liberal party was as specific as it could be—"immediate construction of the Hudson Bay railway to Port Nelson." That promise was reiterated here in the House in the Speech from the Throne; it was made again in the Prince Albert by-election. Again, when the leader of the government in the Senate said that the vote was only for repairs, that statement was afterwards denied in this House. The people of western Canada expect that there will be no more dilly-dallying about this thing. They do not want to be put off further, and if \$3,000,000 is not enough—and remember, the construction of the 92 miles could be proceeded with concurrently with the repairs—we expected that the amount required would be voted this session. I say that this House should go on record as definitely committing the government of Canada to the construction of the road right to the bay. That is all that I suggest they should do. I quite realize that if the road is constructed to the bay, the further question of the construction of harbour works and improvements will come up subsequently. But by the time that does come up, we shall expect the government to have sufficient in-