

sitate a close supervision over the appropriation and the expenditure of these moneys.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: My honourable friend could put that condition in this Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: But my honourable friends have not seen fit to restrict themselves to that.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: But the Senate can do so.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: When I said a few moments ago that this one thousand and some odd miles of railways would cost no less than \$100,000,000, I think the statement made by my honourable friend was that this branch road from Montreal to Joliette, being 12 miles long, through graded and tied, would require \$350,000 to put the steel on it. That means practically \$30,000 a mile for steel alone; and yet it is proposed to build these roads for about \$27,000 a mile.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I corrected myself by reading the statement. I am informed that the statement which I heard made to the Minister was incorrect, in so far as the road-bed only has been bought, and that there has been no grading and there are no ties.

Hon. Mr. FOWLER: It is still worse.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: I do not want to accuse my honourable friend of insincerity in this matter; but when I look at the smile which surrounds the visage of my honourable friend when he looks at this Bill, I cannot be convinced of his sincerity in this project, or the sincerity of the Government. If they want to build the 29 branches enumerated in this schedule, there is a very simple way of proceeding with the work—just as their predecessors have done for the last 50 odd years—by following the well-established parliamentary practice which ensures the opinion of Parliament being expressed as to the expenditure and the promise of Parliament to make due examination as to its proper application.

As to whether my honourable friend can give an assurance that each member may select his own branch without our trespassing upon the constitutional practice which has been followed in this Chamber of our not being able to amend a money Bill, I may say that no one honourable gentleman can give that assurance to this House. It is for the House to say whether such a subject is within the power of this Chamber. I fancy that if such a power were exercised we would hear a very strong protest from our friends at the other end of this Building.

I again say to my honourable friend that if the Government are sincere in their desire

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED.

to proceed with this work if they are sincere in their desire to comply with the wishes of the people who expect to be served by these branches, this House is prepared to give the most sympathetic consideration to any Estimates that may be brought down for the purpose. But when the Government of the day departs from well-established practice and submits to this Chamber a Bill which proposes that Parliament should abdicate its functions and hand over to an irresponsible Board absolute authority over the expenditure of this money and refuse to account for it to Parliament until three years have elapsed, then I say this House is justified in insisting upon the submission of the amendment which was moved last night, and which I am satisfied the House will accept.

Hon. J. A. CALDER: Honourable gentlemen, I have not the right to speak again, but I would like to say just one word. The leader of the Opposition has intimated that, even if we should decide that we have the right to amend the schedule to this Bill, a question might be raised as to our power to do so.

It is quite clear, and I am sure every member of this House from the Province of Saskatchewan will agree with me, that there are certain branch lines in that Province the building of which has been held up since the beginning of the war—lines that are absolutely necessary and will pay from the day they are built. Are we going to be placed in such a position that because of certain procedure in this House the building of those lines is to be delayed for another year?

I could give the names of those lines and explain the circumstances connected with each of them, but I do not want to take your time. Among those lines there is not one which, in my judgment, should not have been built long ago; and if their building is to be delayed because the Government has brought its legislation before us in this form, and because certain rules of this House and the other House interfere, I say there is something radically wrong.

The leader of the Government has said that we have certain power; that we can strike out certain items in this schedule. Suppose we do so, and the Speaker rules against us, and there is an appeal against the ruling of the Speaker and we agree to do so by a majority vote in this House, where are we at?

Hon. Mr. McMEANS: It does not follow that because this Bill is thrown out the