

receiver and we say that was a disgraceful and unbusinesslike thing to do. But once it is in the hands of the receiver it must be dealt with in a businesslike way.

Mr. ROWELL: I shall take up both of the hon. gentleman's points. The Grand Trunk Pacific was in default. They said they could not operate the roadway any longer for lack of funds. What could the Government of Canada do,—continue to pay millions of dollars of the people's money for the benefit of private stockholders? The people would not stand for any such policy any longer. We pursued it too long. And when the Grand Trunk Pacific took this position, the Government of Canada took the proper course of putting a receiver in possession, and if the Government had not done so and made clear to the Grand Trunk Railway and its shareholders that they were no longer going to pay out the money of the country for the benefit of private stockholders we would not have had the agreement that is before us tonight. The Government took a firm stand that it was bound to see the interests of the people of this country protected in connection with railway matters, and for that reason it has been possible to conclude the satisfactory agreement that has been reached with the Grand Trunk. My hon. friends must face the issue. Either the Grand Trunk Pacific was a proper undertaking, or—I repeat—it was a gigantic national blunder and should not have been built. If it should have been built then it should be worth to the people of Canada what it cost.

Mr. McKENZIE: That is not an argument.

Mr. ROWELL: You must support one or other of these contentions. If it should have been built, then it should be worth to the people what it cost. Now, my hon. friend said that I supported its building. I did.

Mr. VIEN: So did I.

Mr. ROWELL: We both believed it should have been built. But I do not believe that the Canadian Northern should have been allowed to parallel it by means of guarantees and grants made by this Government and the provincial governments.

An hon. MEMBER: That is another question.

Mr. ROWELL: Both governments are responsible for the Canadian Northern, and three transcontinental railways built by

Government assistance under private ownership are largely responsible for the trouble in connection with our railway situation at the present time. It is nothing short of a national crime to see railways paralielng each other for hundreds of miles in some sections of the country. We have built away beyond our population and capacity to provide traffic to make them pay at the present time. Only by the development of the country and the increased traffic due to settlement and colonization will the railways be brought into the position of earning properties, and so I say to my hon. friend that to suggest that we should liquidate the Grand Trunk Pacific and to ascertain, when it is liquidated, the amount of obligations, is to suggest that one of the crowning achievements of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's political career, as he always claimed, should be discredited and the railway sold on the market. That is not in the national interest, which will be best served by our acquiring the Grand Trunk railway, which carries with it the Grand Trunk Pacific, and unifying the whole into a national system as this agreement proposes should be done, and as the Minister of Railways and the Minister of the Interior have outlined to-day. That is what the people of the country want. That is what is needed if the present system of railways is either to be made efficient or to be brought within the region of a paying transportation proposition.

Mr. TOBIN: Do I understand the minister to say that the people want what he says?

Mr. ROWELL: That is what the people want.

Mr. TOBIN: Then I am very much surprised.

Mr. ROWELL: I know there are two classes of people opposed to this proposal, and one is the other great transportation system of this country.

Mr. TOBIN: Who is that?

Mr. ROWELL: The Canadian Pacific Railway.

Mr. TOBIN: The Canadian Pacific Railway don't bother about it.

Mr. ROWELL: I do not know whether it bothers or comforts my hon. friend. Possibly it may comfort more than bother him.

Mr. TOBIN: They are not worrying about it.