

material extent in the consideration of the partial appropriation which is now before us. I am told that the entire mineral wealth out there is south of mile 214. My information is that no minerals have been discovered north of that point. The mineral belt lies considerably nearer The Pas than even mile 214 to which the road is now operated twice a month and affords ample facilities for the transport of all minerals produced in that district, and I therefore suggest to the minister that this present expenditure be confined to improving the road as a branch line, or, to use what is really a synonymous term, a colonization road—not a standard main line—up to mile 214. The road is now tumbling down and is unsafe for locomotives. As a matter of fact the railwaymen are fearful when setting out from The Pas as to whether they will ever bring the locomotive back. Why should we not put into working condition the existing road which passes through the mineral belt, and have a complete report presented to the House as to what further extensions are necessary to open up every prospective mine within a considerable distance of the line? Because this line, as I view the map, runs right through the mineral belt, although the minerals are to be made available only by extensions in an eastern and western direction from the line. We could vote this three million dollars on such an understanding. Why should not the minister undertake to spend \$2,000,000 in putting into proper operating order the line as far as mile 214? Why not encourage likely prospectors to come in and ascertain what can be done in opening up that mineral country? Why not submit to the House every bit of information available with regard to the possibilities of the district? The government, it seems to me, might well study the views advanced by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) last night in his address, many suggestions in which I must say I heartily approve of. We can have definite information on the subject whether from engineering or other experts. I am sure it is possible to collect all the facts and all the information which is to be found in a hundred and one reports, and which may be supplemented by calling upon those who have already reported upon the subject to give more definite information. All that we can, I have no doubt, easily procure and embody in concrete form so that in voting further appropriations for the Hudson Bay railway we may

at least have the satisfaction of knowing that there is some practical, substantial ground for our expenditures.

Those of us who have come into this House for the first time do not feel bound in the slightest degree by the political game which was played between the two parties to secure popular support in the northwest in 1911. Nor do we feel bound by the proposition made on the one hand by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) to secure a large vote from Saskatchewan in the last election, any more than we consider ourselves committed, on the other hand, to any of the counter propositions, as reported in the press, made by some of the leading Conservatives to obtain the same support. We wish to exercise intelligent, conscientious judgment. If the road, by any reasonable expenditure within our means, can be made a profitable enterprise capable of serving the interests of that western district, we are anxious to do everything in our power to promote to that extent the national welfare of Canada. But we do not want to be seduced, by mere camouflage or by mere dreams, into making further appropriations of money which is so necessary for development in other parts of the country, and wasting it on a project upon which \$20,000,000 has already been expended without any results up to the present day.

Mr. MULLINS: Are all the brains of the country centred in Montreal? Have we no intelligence in western Canada?

Mr. CAHAN: I quite conceive that we in the east in some matters are mere children intellectually as compared with some hon. gentlemen from the west, but we have interests to represent, and therefore we want all the information available to our dull brains so that we may satisfy our conscientious judgments in considering such a question as this. And I ask for no more than such information. If this appropriation is restricted simply to putting the existing road into shape with a view to saving what money has already been spent—spent, in my opinion, recklessly—if it is to recondition the road up to mile 214, which I understand is as far as it goes now, opening up all the timber resources now waiting to be developed, then I am prepared to stand up to-night or to-morrow or at any other time and vote in favour of it. But I do not feel disposed to vote in favour of a readjustment of the line, so as to place it in operating state, if such a vote is to be regarded as a promise and a pledge on the part of this