

HON. MR. OLIVER: I was just going to come to that. In the Act of 1872 -- and I am getting away, as you can see, from my notes, for the purpose of brevity -- giving a land grant of 50,000,000 acres, the estimated length of the road to be constructed was 2,500 miles. The land grant averaged 20,000 acres per mile, which, spread over 2,500 miles, would give 50,000,000 acres. When the Act of 1881 was passed, owing to the mileage then under construction by the Dominion Government, the length of new line to be constructed by the Company was estimated at 2,000 miles; it had been reduced by 500 miles. The land grant, therefore, of 25,000,000 acres would average 12,500 per mile. On that basis British Columbia's portion would have been 6,375,000 acres, whereas she contributed 12,550,000 acres, or considerably over double what the strict terms of union entitled her to contribute.

In 1871, when the resolutions admitting British Columbia into Confederation were up for discussion, Sir George E. Cartier, speaking of the land grant and the proposal to give 50,000,000 acres, said: that the railway, starting from Nipissing, would cover about 2,500 miles. 700 miles of which would pass through Ontario; that they did not expect to get entirely the twenty-mile grant on each side of the road, but they expected to get from the Ontario Government every alternate lot on each side of the line for that 700 miles. That would give 9,000,000 acres.

Now, the fact is, Mr. Premier, that British Columbia was the only province in the Dominion that contributed anything directly as a province -- I say, "as a province"; I am speaking of it as apart from a province in relation to the Dominion -- to the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. British Columbia, of course, carries her share of the burden -- of the land grant, of the money grant, of the cost of construction -- equally with other parts of Canada. I think that is a point that is well worthy of very careful consideration.

There is another feature of the situation with regard to which I want to say a word or two, namely, as to how far the present Canadian Pacific Railway Company is obligated to consider the terms of union with British Columbia. In a case which was heard before the Privy Council, the Attorney-General of British Columbia vs. the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, their lordships held that the Canadian Pacific Railway had been constructed in fulfilment of an obligation that the Dominion Government assumed under the terms of union between the Dominion and British Columbia. The Act of 1881, covering the contract with the present company, recites:

Whereas by the terms and conditions of the admission of British Columbia into union with the Dominion of Canada, the Government of the Dominion has assumed the obligation of causing a railway to be constructed, connecting the Seaboard of British Columbia with the railway system of Canada:

And it goes on to say:

And

W.L. Mackenzie King Papers
Memoranda & Notes