

with the better roads, the idea being to endeavour if possible to put them on a sound basis. But the only way in which this can really be done is for the treasury of the United States to come to their rescue; and I predict, after a careful study of the proposition, that even the great New York Central will not be able to finance itself now; and I do not think that either the Pennsylvania or the minor roads have any future before them. So clearly was congress impressed by these circumstances that, as I have said, it ordered a re-valuation of the roads; and congress I believe will be forced to come to their relief, and take the position which one of the ministers of the late government in Canada took when relief was sought for the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk. He said, "I readily gave them money to help them out, knowing they would come back to me for more, and then I would get the roads." Well, the American government will acquire the company-owned roads of the United States in very much the same way, and they will co-ordinate them into a single system as publicly owned railways. So those who deplore the fact that public ownership of railways cannot succeed in this country had better ponder how the company owned roads have failed in the United States.

There is room in this country for two great railway systems, but there is not room for any ascendancy of the Canadian Pacific either from political or an economic point of view. The executive of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company must be content to face the situation as it is. If they care to work in co-operation with the National Railways, I have no objection. The two companies might very well pool some of the business, for there are unnecessary trains run by both roads that could be cut out. The National road which possesses the best grades and the best strategy in transportation would be willing, I imagine, to allow the Canadian Pacific Railway running rights on terms.

But be that as it may, I have every confidence in the National Railways, and I am sure parliament will enact any necessary legislation for their improvement. I was talking to a friend the other day, a Senator, who has a proposal to meet the situation as it presents itself to him. He told me that probably we might have to put our railways under a somewhat improved board to what we have now, and he suggested that we might very well get men of the standing of Sir Joseph Flavelle, to become members of such a trust or board. I know we can get men of his stamp. But even if we do not, with

[Mr. W. F. Maclean.]

the management we have at present I have every confidence in the success of our National Railways as against the success of the company owned railways in the United States, and I am certain that under a fair revaluation, which would involve a considerable reduction of their present capitalization, our National Railways, while they may not be able to earn very large dividends, will at least in a very short time show a surplus sufficient to pay a low rate of interest on the debenture issues, and will continue to give the country good transportation service. This is a splendid asset owned by the people of Canada—we are the shareholders. The shareholders of the Canadian Pacific are not confined to Canada, there are some in the United States, some in Great Britain and some in other countries of Europe, but if they have any regard for the future of their investment they will be prepared at no distant date to make an arrangement with the Canadian National System.

This is an appropriate time in which to bring before the House a subject that touches the economics not only of Canada but of the world. Notwithstanding all that we have suffered from the war, notwithstanding the accumulation of riches in some of the countries which participated in the war, and notwithstanding the enormous gold reserve that the United States has created, there is something that is astounding in the condition of the world to-day, and yet our bankers and our economists more or less ignore it. This subject has been brought to our attention in this House and it is coming before us again. I refer to the awful gambling in the staples of life that is carried on on the great stock exchanges of the world. On the Chicago grain exchange and on the New York produce exchange the great staples of life are dealt in—wheat, oats, flour, barley, cotton, sugar, and so on. The rising price of sugar has been a matter of public discussion during the last few weeks both in this country and in the United States, and some relief has been secured here partly because of the action taken by a committee of this House and partly because the women of this country have set their faces against the use of sugar at present prices. There is no doubt that enormous gambling is going on in connection with the sugar supply of the world. A great deal of the discontent that exists throughout the world to-day is due to this heartless gambling in the staples of life. As an apologist for the sugar refiners of Canada pointed out the other day—I refer to the Montreal Gazette—there are a lot of gougers who have