

by the time during which the ports, harbours, or roadsteads on the shores of the bay can be entered by vessels of a suitable description for such navigation.

From the evidence adduced it appears that such ports or harbours are open on an average from four and a half to five months in each year to ordinary vessels.

The latest report that we have had on the subject, that of the Senate of Canada, declares that the route is a feasible route and that in time it will be profitable.

I said a moment ago that I first heard of the Hudson Bay railway when I came to this country over twenty-three years ago. I well remember how, in the first general election in Canada of which I have any knowledge, that of 1908, speakers on behalf of Liberal candidates made a number of statements at that time referring to the Hudson Bay railway. They pointed to the courageous manner in which the late Liberal chieftain, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, had made his announcement in the town of Welland, Ontario, that the Liberal government of that day were going to build this railway. When the Conservative party came into power in the year 1911 they took up the question of the Hudson Bay railway and began to carry it to completion. I cannot conceive that the Liberal government in 1908 would undertake such a work as this without full and complete investigation. Neither can I believe that the Conservative party, when they came into power, would carry on such a work without a very exhaustive investigation as to the possibilities of this route. Engineers were sent out by both governments. Both governments proclaimed that the Hudson Bay railway was a feasible route and that they were going to carry it to completion. I know, Mr. Speaker, that sometimes in the West we hear it said, in regard to the completion of the Hudson Bay railway, that both parties were playing politics, and that the project was simply a bait used at election time to obtain the votes of the western people. I cannot, Mr. Speaker, subscribe to that idea either. I do not believe that our governments and our statesmen have sunk so low in this country that they would willingly spend \$20,000,000 of western money in order to bribe the electors of western Canada. I believe that both governments came to the definite conclusion that this route was a feasible one and determined to carry out the work.

I would like now, for a moment or two, to discuss the question of the financing of this railway because I know that it is not generally understood in the West—or in the East either for that matter—how the financing of the Hudson Bay railway was undertaken. It has been understood that the whole of Canada

had been financing the Hudson Bay railway. The facts, however, are as follows: In the year 1908, when the Dominion Lands Act was brought before parliament, provision was made whereby homesteads, or second homesteads and pre-emptions were set apart, a large area of land in western Canada being selected for the purpose, and the proceeds of the sale of this land were to be devoted to the financing of the Hudson Bay railway. Under the statute of 1908 approximately 8,050,720 acres of land have already been sold, the revenue derived therefrom being \$24,152,160, and the whole of this amount has not yet been spent. There are 2,500,000 acres at the present time which have not been paid for in full. You will see, therefore, that practically the whole of the revenue devoted to the building of the Hudson Bay railway came from the lands of the West. It is western land that is paying for this road, and there are enough homesteads or second homesteads and pre-emptions still in the West to yield sufficient revenue for the completion of the project.

I would like to quote here as an additional authority on this matter, what was said during the session of 1912-13 by a former Minister of the Interior, Hon Mr. Oliver. As reported at page 10951 of Hansard, Mr. Oliver said:

The question has been raised here in regard to the cost of this railway, the charge upon the treasury. Some years ago the principle of pre-emptions was introduced into the western country, with the understanding that the fund accruing from the sale of pre-emptions would be considered as an extra source of revenue from which the Hudson bay railway might be constructed. There was no ear-marking of money received. When the policy of the sale of pre-emptions was introduced, it was introduced with the understanding that a new source of revenue was being created, which would relieve the general treasury from the cost of the Hudson bay railway. Therefore, the treasury of Canada is not finding the money for building the railway. It is the land of the Northwest and the price that is being paid for that land that is building the Hudson bay railway. Enough money is being taken out of pre-emptions of the West to pay for that railway.

Again in the year 1901, during a discussion in Committee of Supply, the following question was put by Mr. Lake, the representative of a western constituency at that time, and replied to by the hon. gentleman who is now Acting Minister of Railways.

Mr. Lake: It was understood by this House I think that the money to be expended on the construction of the Hudson bay railway was to come from a special fund to be created by the sale of pre-emptions?

Mr. Graham: Yes.

I would like to take up the question of the Hudson Bay railway and the branch lines, which was referred to by the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Knox) in his speech