

owned about one and a half and the result was that the Canadian Northern could not only not give a proper service but could not take away the traffic that was originating on its lines. I came into this House not once but twice asking for authority to purchase more equipment, and I believe every hon. member will agree that it is good policy to get sufficient equipment at as early a moment as possible to take care of the traffic originating on the Canadian National lines. We have not sufficient equipment now and were it not for the large expenditures that must be made for other purposes I would urge doubling the equipment at the present time. If I did what my judgment prompts me to do I would order right now at least 5,000 coal cars, get them here at the earliest possible moment and use them to carry coal from Nova Scotia and Alberta so that this country might be in no danger of a fuel shortage. But when I come to this House and ask for \$20,000,000 or \$25,000,000 for equipment, people say that I am asking for money for the Canadian National system that should not be expended. Every dollar we can afford to put into equipment is the best money that can be spent in Canada to-day. It will encourage people to produce, and to take their raw materials and have them manufactured, it will help to export our goods to foreign countries and it will in addition save a crisis in some of our provinces that could not take place if we had proper equipment. If I came again and asked for \$15,000,000, \$20,000,000 or \$25,000,000 for cars that are absolutely necessary if we are going to protect the people of this country from probable trouble on the ground of the shortage of coal supplies I would likely receive criticism that would hardly be justified. Conditions are such that I have in my estimates hesitated to ask for any more for this purpose.

Mr. MACLEAN (York): How much are the private-owned roads of the United States asking for similar equipment? Are they not asking for over \$1,000,000,000?

Mr. J. D. REID: The hon. member is right; they propose expending over \$1,000,000,000. I am now arranging to haul coal, to see what it will cost, from the western provinces to Ontario and Quebec and to bring it east at the earliest possible moment. I am trying to do, and will do, the best I can. The railways are working together. We will do our best to prevent any serious situation but we have not the equipment that will justify the carrying of

a very large quantity of coal from these provinces because it was not ordered and could not be got here until a month or two. But we have the equipment and can bring the coal from the United States so long as we are not held up by the switchmen's strike or other strikes on these railways. That is a question that some one will have to deal with in the near future in so far as bringing the coal from the East and the West is concerned.

The hon. member for Pontiac (Mr. Cahill) complains that I would not give him the information concerning the expenditures of these railways. The protection of the public is as I have stated. We have been operating the railways who, we believe, are honest and are operating them in the public interest. We have in addition to that one of the best firms of auditors who audit the accounts of the railway. That is what is done by any private-owned corporation. I do not think it has been asserted that any private-owned railway would give out every item of expenditure. There is not any doubt at all but that we would injure our railway if we advertised or gave to our opponents everything that was expended in connection with the operation of the railway. Let me give a concrete case. You call for tenders for ties, for coal or for any other item you might mention. You may call for tenders in the western provinces and in the eastern provinces. There is no doubt that you will have to pay different prices at different mines. There are different prices that you could pay for ties. That applies to every item entering into the operation of railways. The hon. gentleman mentioned insurance rates. If the hon. member will inquire of the management he will see that the Canadian National railways and probably the Canadian Pacific get certain percentages off, that they get cheaper rates than probably some other corporations will. If you expose that, or if the insurance agents should make that public, you will not get the same rates.

I do not claim that the members of this House or the public should not have the fullest information or go into any details in regard to the expenditures. I would have no hesitation in making public any information in connection with the road that I believe would not interfere with its operation or would not be against the public interest. But we are only starting to operate railways. The report that I lay on the Table of the House each year brings the Canadian National railways under the