

reason the vote was not dealt with on that occasion was because a number of Conservative members were absent attending a meeting in Montreal, and that it should have been proceeded with. It further points out that direct information had been given by the government that the Hudson Bay estimate would be considered on that day. I take issue with that statement. It is true that we knew that railway estimates would come up, but many days are spent here on the estimates of a particular department without certain individual items being reached.

Mr. DUNNING: If my hon. friend will permit me, in reply to a question across the floor of the House I stated a week ago that on the next occasion that the railway estimates were before the House, the Hudson Bay railway vote would be taken up. I am not now quarrelling with my hon. friend's statement; I mention this only in the interest of accuracy.

Mr. KENNEDY (Winnipeg): If that statement was made by the minister, I did not hear it. So far as the particular occasion was concerned, there were a number of Conservative members absent on that day, including Conservative members who were in favour of that road. We spoke to the acting leader of the opposition and suggested to him that if by any chance the Hudson Bay railway vote was reached, it was our desire that it be not disposed of until we had had an opportunity to speak. I was one of those members, and I now take this opportunity to-night, as one of those then absent, to say that I stand foursquare behind this vote of \$3,000,000 for the Hudson Bay railway.

Mr. FORKE: I think it is only fair to the Winnipeg Free Press to say that they devoted a whole editorial praising the Conservative members at Ottawa for the stand they are taking on the Hudson Bay railway in their speeches. The hon. member saw that, I am sure.

Mr. KENNEDY (Winnipeg): I do not know that the Winnipeg Free Press feels the need of any special sponsor here.

Mr. FORKE: It spoke very flatteringly of the Conservative members. Did the hon. member see it or not?

Mr. KENNEDY (Winnipeg): I did not, as a matter of fact. I say, Mr. Chairman, that this is not a party issue. Examine the records of the parties since confederation, and you will find that prominent leaders of both political parties in this country have declared for the Hudson Bay railway. Sir John A.

Macdonald said that it was the great natural outlet for the west. Coming down to more recent times, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a great champion of that route. In the last political campaign, unless I misunderstood what they said in the west, the leaders of both the Conservative and the Liberal parties declared themselves for at least such a measure of completion of that road as would carry the line to the bay and give the road an effective test. For that measure of completion at the present I stand. I am not one of those who is going to urge upon members in the east, who are not perhaps so directly interested in that road as are we of the west, the necessity of immediately committing this country to the expenditure of \$26,000,000 odd given in the estimated cost by the hon. Minister of Railways, but I am here to insist as a right, not only of the west but of this whole country, that that road be completed, and completed forthwith, to the bay. That I submit is not asking too much.

Appropriations for the completion of the Hudson Bay route have been included in the estimates every year between the years 1910 and 1918. They have been passed by successive governments and they have been passed by the Senate. Why, then, at this time does the whole question of the feasibility of the route come up? I submit that is a matter which has been passed upon at least to the extent of completion to tidewater. I will not go into an argument as to the feasibility of the route. I point merely to the last official report on the subject, which is the report of the special committee of the Senate in 1920, the effect and the exact wording of which has been placed upon Hansard by the hon. Minister of Railways. That committee declared the route feasible. I grant you that you can call witnesses for and against the route. Take any man who is placed on trial for his life on a charge of murder; you can call eminent alienists both for and against, twenty to prove that he is sane and twenty to prove that he is insane. It is much the same with the matter of the Hudson Bay route. I submit that the question of the feasibility of the route has already been passed upon, and is no longer a matter of argument in this House, at least in so far as to warrant its completion to tidewater.

On the question as to payment for this route, the Minister of Railways has drawn attention to the fact, if I interpreted his meaning correctly, that already certain western lands have been set aside, if not by statute, at least it was generally and distinctly understood, for the purpose of producing a revenue for the construction of this very