

period—I have stated four years as the term of these resolutions—this line of communication will be perfected and we will have the satisfaction of finding that we have the complete realization of our hopes and expectations in reference to the trans-continental traffic of the Canadian Pacific Railway being brought down to our own ports. The questions with which I have been dealing up to this point, of course, are based upon broad and national considerations. They are founded upon a policy that is recognized and has been recognized from the first as the first duty that we owed to the country, and that is to be obtained by the construction of a national line of railway the closest possible intercommunication between one section of our country and another. The great disadvantage under which Canada has laboured, if it may be regarded as a disadvantage, was the remoteness of important sections of our common country from one another, and we have all regarded it as a first duty we owed to the country to endeavour to remove and obviate that as far as possible by diminishing the distance between all the important points of communication in the several sections of our country, thus bringing them as closely as we could together. Not only commercially but socially, the greatest possible advantage may be fairly expected from shortening the distance of intercommunication between the great commercial centres of the country and the outlying portions of it.

Now, Sir, in this long extract which I have read from that important speech of Sir Charles Tupper, the central idea is that the mode of communicating with the maritime ports over the Intercolonial Railway was inadequate on account of its abnormal length, and that it was the duty of the Canadian parliament and the Canadian people to at once provide for a shorter route of communication between the west and the east. This policy was never dissented from; it was accepted immediately. But, I would call the attention of the House to one thing which is noticeable, which perhaps has escaped the attention of gentlemen on the other side, but which did not escape our attention when we were sitting on that side—it is noticeable that whilst Sir Charles Tupper lays great stress upon the fact that our national harbours must be upon Canadian territory and that we should have a shorter line of railway between St. John and Halifax he specially avoided any reference to the equally great necessity that that line of railway should be on Canadian territory.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

THE PRIME MINISTER. Sitting as we were on the opposition side of the House we were not slow to point to this omission. We called the attention of the government to it, and as we received no satisfaction, then I, sitting in the seat now occupied by my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk), moved the following amendment because we had reason to believe as it actually turned out to be true afterwards, that it was the intention of the government of that day not

to build the short line of railway upon Canadian territory but upon American territory. I moved:

That the said resolution be not now read a second time, but that it be referred back to a Committee of the Whole with power to amend the same by providing that the route for the line of railway connecting Montreal with the harbours of St. John and Halifax, for which a subsidy of \$170,000 a year for 15 years is provided, should be subject to the approval of parliament.

I am sorry to say that this motion was defeated. If it had not been defeated, if the policy which was there enunciated had been implemented, probably it would not be my duty to-day to ask this House to vote money for the building of another line between Quebec and Moncton, for the line would have been built on the very ground where we now propose to locate it. However, the motion was defeated. And in order to obtain the majority of parliament to vote against this motion, the government had to promise and it made the promise on the floor of this House, that during the recess between that session and the following session, surveys and explorations would be made by competent engineers to discover if we could not have a better route than the one which was indicated as we understood, across the state of Maine. During the recess in the summer of 1884 several exploring parties went out and their reports can be found in a return which was brought down in the session of 1885 being a:

Return to an Address (Senate) presented to His Excellency the Governor General, dated the 17th March last; praying His Excellency to cause to be laid before this House copies of the reports of the various surveys made by engineers under the direction of the government for a line of railway connecting Montreal with the harbours of St. John and Halifax by the shortest and best practicable route including the reports of Messrs. A. L. Light and Vernon Smith on the lines surveyed by them, respectively, running up the valley of the Etchemin river and from Canterbury, N.B., to the northern end of Chesuncook Lake, in the state of Maine.

In the session of 1885, the government came down with the policy which had been foreshadowed the previous year, that is the policy to build a short line of railway, not upon Canadian territory but across American territory, in the state of Maine. The resolution was introduced by Sir Charles Tupper and it was in these terms:

Also for a line of railway connecting Montreal with the harbours of St. John and Halifax via Sherbrooke, Moose Head Lake, Mattawamkeag, Harvey, Fredericton and Salisbury, a subsidy not exceeding \$80,000 per annum for 20 years, forming in the whole, together with the subsidy authorized by the Act 47 Vic., cap. 8, a subsidy not exceeding \$250,000 per annum, the whole of which shall be paid in aid of the construction of such line for a period of 20 years, or a guarantee of a like sum for a like period as interest on the bonds of the company undertaking the work.