

things from that point of view, I do not consider that we are justified in asking the country to put up the money called for by this Bill. Now we might consider this question from another point of view. The people of this country to-day are asked to raise money for the Patriotic Fund, Red Cross Fund and other works of that kind for the purpose of carrying on necessary works in prosecuting the war; and the amount of money raised in that way would not equal the amount of money that we are asked in this case to pledge the country to. When the people of Canada realize the amount of money that this whole scheme will cost, I think they will consider that it is not an undertaking that the Government should be dealing with at the present time. Some years ago when the country was in a much more prosperous condition than it is to-day, the Minister of Railways was asked to take over one of these roads and make it a part of the Intercolonial railway, but he did not feel himself justified at that time in doing so. He considered it was not in the interest of the country that the Intercolonial railway should be buying up railroads here and there simply because men who had put their money into them and had floated the bonds on these roads found they were not as prosperous as they had expected, and they were not getting the return for their money that they had hoped for. Therefore, if we were not justified, in the opinion of the then Minister of Railways, in taking hold of that Lotbinière and Megantic road, I do not consider we are justified in taking hold of it to-day, when we have so much heavier burdens to place upon the people of this country. Owing to the war the Minister of Finance has had to place on the people of this country direct taxation for the purpose of helping to defray the cost of this war. He has had to cause the people of this country to pay an extra cent on every letter they post and two cents on every cheque they draw, and a number of other taxations of that kind. The people will pay those taxes willingly if it means that the money will be used for the purpose of meeting the burdens placed on the country by this war, but I doubt very much whether the people will feel that they are justified in paying these taxes if the Government use their money for the purpose of buying railroads of this sort, which are not paying concerns, which may be said to be non-producing railroads in any shape or form. It will be many

Hon. Mr. BOSTOCK.

years before they can be put in any position to produce a revenue to pay the interest on the money that has been spent upon them. The other day there was a long discussion in another place on the question of the Government taking over all the railways of the country and assuming the nationalization of the railways. If the Government is to be called upon to take over those railways and pay for them a great deal more than any business man would pay for them, I consider that it would be one of the very strongest arguments against any proposal for the nationalization of the railways of this country. The people will consider that the Government at the present time should do everything they can to conserve the resources of the country and prevent waste of money, but while the members of the Government have been telling the people from one end of the country to the other that they must economize and save money in every possible direction, they set the worst possible example in proposing to buy out roads of this kind, and turn them over to the Intercolonial railway and the National Transcontinental. Hon. gentlemen here have not had a great deal of time to consider this Bill. When they come to look into it I think they will feel that they are not justified in placing on the country to-day a burden such as this Bill calls upon them to carry. The burdens of the country are increasing enormously in a financial way, and at the same time, I regret to say, our population is not increasing nearly as fast as it did years ago. With a population that is increasing slowly, we will have to meet a burden for interest on indebtedness such as this country has never had to face before, and the people will find themselves burdened with taxation which will take them a very long time to overcome. The Minister of Inland Revenue found it necessary the other day to place a tax on all business enterprises in this country. He took 25 per cent of the profits of companies after they had paid 10 per cent dividends, for the purpose of supplying the money necessary to help prosecute the war, and yet we find the Government is asking us now to pass a Bill which will cause them to incur an expenditure that will eat up at least one-third, if not more, of the proceeds of that tax. These are the reasons why I consider that this House would not be justified in passing this Bill. I therefore move, seconded by Hon. Mr. Watson,